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CLIMATE CHANGE MCCARTHYISM
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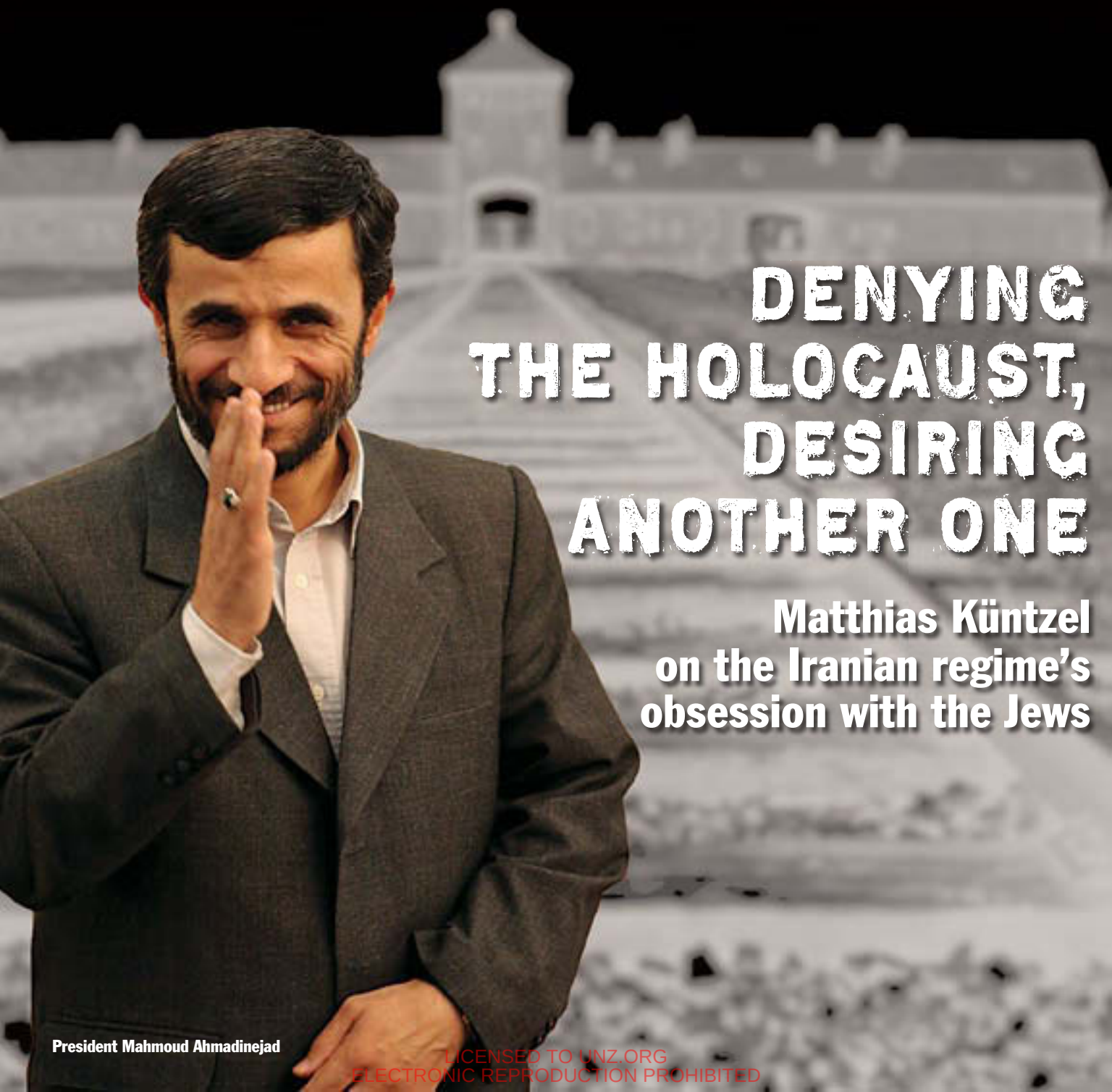

DENYING THE HOLOCAUST, DESIRING ANOTHER ONE

Matthias Küntzel on the Iranian regime's obsession with the Jews

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

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This barber knows his cutting-edge automotive technology

I'm Henry Besanceney, the only barber in Honeoye Falls, a small town in upstate New York. When you have GM's top scientists in your chair like I do, you get to know a lot about the newest cutting edge technologies. A whole lot. I've learned they're engineering the first drivable hydrogen fuel cell by-wire powertrains. It's an innovation that will outperform today's engines on cost, power and durability. The only thing missing is the pollutants. That's because the only emission the fuel cells produce is pure, clean water vapor. Now that's refreshing!

They say GM is also employing other renewable fuel technologies in their vehicles, like E-85 ethanol made from corn. You'd have to talk to a barber in Nebraska about that one.

Henry A. Besanceney

Henry Besanceney

GM

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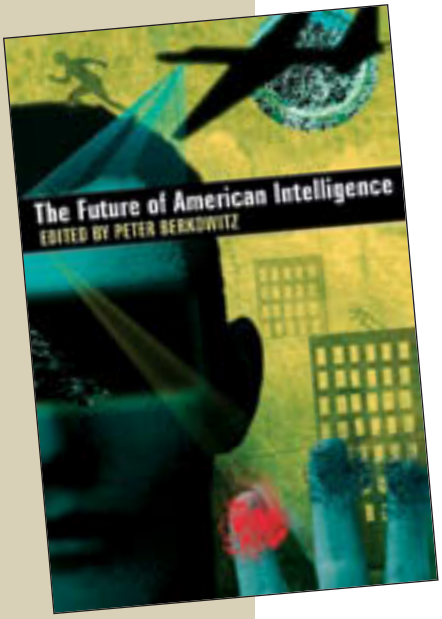

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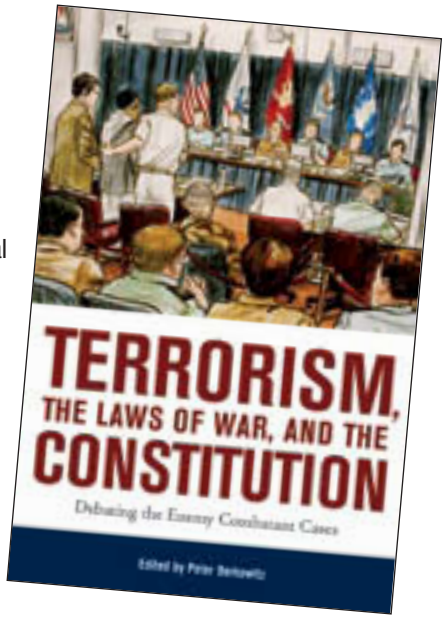

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Contents

February 19, 2007 • Volume 12, Number 22

2 Scrapbook . . . *Feith Memo, Ralph de Toledano, and more.*

4 Casual . . . . . *Joseph Bottum, uncredited author.*

5 Correspondence . . . . . *On the old and the dying.*

7 Editorial . . . . . *The GOP's Moment of Truth*

Articles

8 Cash for Kim *From drugs to contraband to U.N. aid—the many rackets of North Korea.* . . . . . BY CLAUDIA ROSETT

10 Master of the Senate *Mitch McConnell runs rings around Harry Reid.* . . . . . BY FRED BARNES

12 Sanctions Against Iran Would Work *Too bad they won't be tried.* . . . . . BY OLIVIER GUITTA

14 The Trouble with Traumatology *Is it advocacy or is it science?* . . . . . BY SALLY SATEL

16 Oil's Not Well in Iraq *But it's not too late to fix the problem.* . . . . . BY MICHAEL MAKOVSKY

Cover: Getty / Scott Barbour
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Features

18 Iran's Obsession with the Jews
Denying the Holocaust, desiring another one. . . . . . BY MATTHIAS KÜNTZEL

22 The Full Schumer
The senator from New York and his imaginary friends. . . . . . BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

26 Scenes from the Climate Inquisition
Stamping out dissent. . . . . . BY STEVEN F. HAYWARD & KENNETH P. GREEN

30 The Rise of the Metro Republicans
How McCain, Romney, and Giuliani may redraw the red-blue map. . . . . . BY NOEMIE EMERY

Books & Arts

35 Theatrical Man *On and off the boards with Robert Brustein.* . . . . . BY JOHN SIMON

38 The Talking Cure *The human voice as the engine of democracy.* . . . . . BY PATRICK J. DENEEN

40 Skin Deep *Age and beauty, the Hollywood way.* . . . . . BY CHARLOTTE ALLEN

42 The Science of Fiction *Plots, characters, agents, and dust jackets.* . . . . . BY DIANE SCHARPER

44 Parody . . . . . *Guerrilla marketing goes national.*

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The 'Feith Memo' Revisited

Much press attention was given last week to a report from the Department of Defense Inspector General. The IG report examined the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, Douglas Feith, and its work on the relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda. In the fall of 2003, the office produced a 50-point bulleted list detailing contacts and cooperation between Iraq and al Qaeda. The document, first reported in this magazine ("Case Closed," by Stephen F. Hayes, November 24, 2003), became known as the "Feith Memo." Critics of the war are now celebrating the IG report both as a critique of the process by which Feith's office examined intelligence (it is that) and confirmation that there was no connection between Iraq and al Qaeda (it is not). As always, Michigan senator Carl Levin is dishonestly leading the charge.

The inspector general found that Feith's office engaged in alternative intelligence analysis (i.e., not emanating from the CIA) and deemed those activities "inappropriate." He's both right and wrong. As this magazine reported at the time, there is no question that the Feith shop was conducting analysis, their denials notwithstanding. But what's wrong with alternative analysis? As former federal prosecutor Andy McCarthy asks in *National Review*:

> What was so "inappropriate"? The people who actually had to fight the war had the audacity to conduct their own independent assessment of what we now know beyond cavil was the Intelligence Community's appallingly sparse and shoddy work. Feith and his unit engaged in critical thinking (can't have that!), and allegedly failed to register their disagreements in a fashion consistent with Intelligence Community protocols (i.e., the governing standards under which, in just the last two decades, the IC has missed the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the emergence of India as a nuclear power, etc.).

Or, as Feith himself put it: Of course his memo "varied from [the] consensus. It was a criticism of that consensus. That is why it was written."

Last week's IG report—or at least the unclassified executive summary—also challenges the Feith Memo on substance. The report says that the Feith office "did not provide 'the most accurate analysis of intelligence' to senior decisionmakers." Now seems like a good time to point out that the intelligence community itself did not provide the most accurate intelligence either. Remember the intelligence community consensus that Baathists and jihadists would not collaborate because of their ideological differences? That seems rather quaint given the daily, deadly Baathist-jihadist collaboration in Baghdad today.

What Carl Levin and others would have us believe is that because the Feith analysis deviated from that of the intelligence community, the Feith analysis was wrong and there was no connection between Iraq and al Qaeda. Some of the conclusions in the Feith Memo did not check out, as we suggested would happen from the beginning. But others are hard to explain away.

As Levin pushes to declassify the IG report, we hope he'll join our calls for declassification of a few other items.

* A document captured in postwar Iraq showing that the Iraqi regime harbored and financed Abdul Rahman Yasin, a key figure in the 1993 attack on the World Trade Center.

* Transcripts of telephone intercepts from senior Iraqi intelligence officials reporting their support for al Qaeda affiliates in northern Iraq.

* Intelligence cited by the Clinton administration that Iraqi chemical weapons scientists were working with al Qaeda-linked Sudanese military officials in the 1990s.

* The FBI debriefing of Wali Khan Amin Shah, a senior al Qaeda operative in U.S. custody since 1995. He told the FBI that Abu Hajer al Iraqi, described by another al Qaeda member as Osama bin Laden's best friend, had a good relationship with Iraqi Intelligence.

The list goes on. ♦

Welcome Back, WETA

It's almost two years now since our editors got up on their hind legs, climbed the pulpit, and denounced, with unwonted ferocity, the directors of WETA-FM, the public radio station that for 50 years had broadcast classical music to the culture-starved residents of the nation's capital. Suddenly, in February 2005, the directors had unilaterally decided to discontinue classical programming. In its place they began offering chat shows from the BBC and NPR round the clock, day after day. Just what the capital needed: more talk.

Our complaint (see "Time for National Private Radio," February 28, 2005) was more than provincial pique, however. In abandoning classical

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music for news programming, WETA joined a nationwide trend among the country's loose-knit network of public radio stations. As we pointed out then, public radio had been originally conceived as a service for preserving and encouraging minority tastes ignored by the market—particularly in the arts, not only in classical music but also in jazz, bluegrass, cabaret, and folk. Now, incrementally and unilaterally, a new generation of programmers was transforming it into the nation's first government-funded news service. All Things Considered, All The Time. Shudder.

And then last month, just as suddenly, the nightmare ended, locally at least. For whatever reason—a marked decline in subscriptions and fund-raising, perhaps—WETA's directors reversed themselves and chucked the chit-chat. Once again the capital can enjoy a public radio station offering something its public audience can't get anywhere else: beautiful music, intelligently presented.

"Classical music, in all its power and beauty, is an essential part of the cultural life of this city," said WETA's president, Sharon Percy Rockefeller. That was our point, too. Let's hope Mrs. Rockefeller's change of heart, for which THE SCRAPBOOK is profoundly grateful, proves contagious nationwide. ♦

Ralph de Toledano, 1916-2007

We note with sorrow the death last week of 90-year-old Ralph de Toledano, the author, editor, musician, syndicated columnist, raconteur, and scholar of jazz who was a fixture in the modern conservative movement in its formative years.

Like many on the intellectual right, he began his journey on the anti-Communist left, first as a precocious Columbia undergraduate in the 1930s, then on the staff of the *New Leader* and, after wartime service, as an official of the American Veterans Committee and publicist for the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. It was the Alger Hiss spy case, which he covered for *Newsweek*, that finally pushed him across the aisle, where he found safe haven as a regular contributor to the fledgling *National Review*, as an early television pundit, and popular columnist for King Features Syndicate.

Above all, Ralph was a character. Born in Tangier into a prominent Sephardic family, his parents brought him to America when he was five, and he studied music and was a legendary editor of the *Columbia Jester*, the college humor magazine, before his interests shifted to politics. Yet he never lost his droll sense of humor, encyclopedic knowledge of popular music, or commitment to the writer's trade, and was for years a welcome fixture at the National Press Club bar. THE SCRAPBOOK will miss him. ♦

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Casual

To Borrow a Phrase

"Plagiarize," as I once wrote. "Let no one else's work evade your eyes. / Remember why the good Lord made your eyes, / so don't shade your eyes, / but plagiarize, plagiarize, plagiarize . . . / only be sure always to call it please, 'research.'"

Sadly, these lines were borrowed from me back in 1959 by a comic singer named Tom Lehrer for a ballad, chiefly lyrical, about the enduring influence of the 19th-century Russian mathematician Nikolai Ivanovich Lobachevsky. Do people still listen to Tom Lehrer? The composer of such uplifting odes as "I Got It from Agnes," "Poisoning Pigeons in the Park," and "The Masochism Tango," he somehow managed to be the man Groucho Marx would have been if Groucho Marx had been a Harvard mathematics instructor—which makes it all the stranger that he risked plagiarizing from me these lines about plagiarism.

Of course, in its way, the theft merely proves my timeless originality. It's a compliment, really, that much of what I do is claimed by others. So influential are my thoughts and phrasings that a great number are actually *pre-stolen*—taken by other writers before I can even get around to thinking or saying them.

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife—that was me.

The square of the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the squares of the two shorter sides—also me.

I saw the best minds of my generation destroyed by madness, starving hysterical naked, / dragging themselves through the negro streets at dawn looking for an angry fix—me, me, me.

But I repeat myself. Last week I picked up a copy of Richard A. Posner's latest little book, *The Little Book of Plagiarism*. Posner is a federal circuit judge who seems to publish books more often than the average person can read them, and he wants to exempt lawyers and judges from the charge of copying. It's not their job to make their work original; it's their job to make their work right. So if one lawyer copies another's compelling argument, or a judge uses a clerk to write a strong opinion, there should be no complaint. But in the arenas of academic writing, journalism, and popular book publishing, *The Little Book of Plagiarism* takes a common sense view of the subject: Plagiarism is more a violation of professional ethics than a criminal offense; there's a difference between allusion and theft; the new electronic media make plagiarism simultaneously easier to commit and easier to catch, etc.

Darren Gygi

Along the way, Posner glances at many of the plagiarism scandals of recent years. There was, for instance, Laurence Tribe, the Harvard law professor who borrowed material for his history of Supreme Court nominations. And Charles J. Ogletree, another Harvard law professor, who bulked up his book on the *Brown* decision with copied pages. And Kaavya Viswanathan, the Harvard undergraduate who plagiarized passages in the chick-lit novel for which she had received a $500,000 advance. And Doris Kearns Goodwin, the Harvard overseer who stole portions of her bestselling histories. ("Fight fiercely, Harvard, fight, fight, fight! / Demonstrate to them our skill," as Tom Lehrer once urged his alma mater. "Albeit they possess the might, / Nonetheless we have the will.")

What's curious is how many of these recent stories of plagiarism were first aired in The Weekly Standard. And how often Judge Posner fails to acknowledge The Weekly Standard for the material on which he relies (except for one passing claim that the liberal Goodwin may have survived the revelation of her scholarly sins because it was a conservative magazine that carried the story about them).

Of course, those of us working the vineyards are used to others drinking the wine. Still, a little credit every once in a while would be nice. Particularly when so much of what one wants to write has been pre-stolen. *I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.* As I was just going to say.

Joseph Bottum

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Judging Drugs

I serve as adjunct scholar to the Abigail Alliance for Better Access to Developmental Drugs, which has sued the Food and Drug Administration to permit terminal patients with no therapeutic options left except death to use investigational drugs. We take issue with key aspects of Robert F. Nagel's "Conservative Judicial Activism?" (Feb. 5). Nagel states incorrectly that the issue rests on whether "there is a constitutional right to use unapproved drugs." The drugs in question are neither approved nor unapproved: They are investigational drugs that have been found safe enough by the FDA for continued testing on hundreds more patients. These investigational drugs have cleared the FDA's Phase 1 and have been found safe enough to be investigated on hundreds of patients in Phase 2.

I argue that the decision to take such drugs should remain between an informed terminal patient with no treatment options left and his experienced oncologist—without government interference by a third party sitting in Rockville, Maryland. The FDA should for safety and efficacy control drugs, but not life.

As to preserving that life, we acknowledge that there is in this country a long established history and tradition, supported by considerable jurisprudence, that constitutionally protects an individual's right to self-defense, self-preservation, and, indeed, "life" itself in the due process clause.

We are reassured, in Nagel's observation, that Justice Antonin Scalia "seems attracted to the idea that the right to self-defense . . . has constitutional status." We further note that Chief Justice Roberts stated in his confirmation hearings that he believes there is a constitutional right to privacy—and, we assert, to its manifestations of self-defense, self-preservation, and "life."

Ronald L. Trowbridge
Fredericksburg, Va.

Robert F. Nagel responds: My use of the phrase "unapproved drugs" referred to my earlier statement that a right to medical self-defense would mean that the government could not prevent a sick individual from using "an experimental drug not yet deemed effective by the Food and Drug Administration." This is entirely consistent with Trowbridge's formulation.

I Grow Old . . .

Regarding Joseph Epstein's "Kid Turns 70" (Jan. 29): Now that I am 75 years old, whenever I am confronted with someone's dates (e.g., Edmund Burke, 1729-1797), I am in the habit of subtracting the date of birth from the date of death (answer: 68), and then comparing that to my own age. If I'm older, I say to myself, "Hah! I have outlived the SOB!" Alternatively, when I think of someone like George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), who fell from a ladder and died at age 94, I think to myself, "If he can do it, then maybe so can I."

I have noticed that my attention is stretching backward; dates around the turn of the last century are familiar friends. I find myself consulting my 11th edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* more often than any recent version. I recall being a kid and seeing World War I veterans marching in an Armistice Day parade. How ancient they seemed to me! But now I realize that there were *only* about 20 years between the world wars.

I used to think with Woody Allen that an exception would be made in my case, but now, at 75, with systems failing, I can see the Eternal Footman holding my coat. Please, no snickering.

Peter Chase
Alpine, Tex.

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The GOP's Moment of Truth

"When Sen. John E. Sununu (R-N.H.) saw reporters approaching him last week, he took off in a sprint, determined to say as little as possible about a nonbinding resolution opposing President Bush's troop-escalation plan, which is expected to come before the Senate today. 'You know where I stand,' the senator, who is considered politically vulnerable back home, said repeatedly as he fled down stairways at the Capitol. 'I'm still looking.'"

—*Washington Post* front page, February 5

And so are we. We're looking for more than a few good Republicans—and John McCain and Lindsey Graham and Mitch McConnell and Judd Gregg have been very good. (And Joe Lieberman has been very, very good. But he unfortunately is a party of one.) We're looking for a little more courage and outspokenness from Republicans across the board (including in the administration).

Most in the GOP, it should be emphasized, are holding firm, supporting their president at a critical time in a crucial war. But a lot of them are doing so quietly, and grudgingly. They might as well speak up in support of the president and his new Iraq commander, General David Petraeus, in their push for victory in Iraq. They will get no credit for their timidity from friends or opponents.

And then there are those Republicans who are fleeing as fast as their feet can carry them from Bush, and from the war—from a difficult and unpopular war prosecuted by a president of their party. After all, they reason, the polls are bad, and November 2008 is approaching.

Leave aside the substantive foolishness of their position (we're against the surge, but we're unwilling to articulate an alternative). The fact is the politics of flight aren't attractive. The Republican party can't escape the Iraq war. It's the central foreign policy challenge taken on by the first post-Cold War Republican administration. If the war ends badly for the country, and the country is convinced that the war was either unnecessary or prosecuted fecklessly, Republican senators and congressmen won't save themselves by jumping ship in February of 2007. The whole party will suffer—the courageous few and the silent majority and the comically evasive alike.

Consider Vietnam. Between 1964 and 1968 the Democrats split and the country lost confidence in them. The Democratic share of the presidential vote went from 61 percent in 1964 to 42 percent in 1968. And Democrats lost 9 Senate seats and 52 House seats in that four-year period. In other words: If Bush loses in Iraq, Republicans across the board will pay a price in 2008 and beyond.

Fortunately, most Republicans are hanging in there with Bush and Petraeus. The number of GOP deserters—or, to be more charitable, conscientious objectors—remains small. The large majority of Republicans continue to support the effort in Iraq. But they could do so more outspokenly and more aggressively. They shouldn't view defending the war as simply a grim duty. After all, Gen. Petraeus, who assumes command this weekend, believes we can win the war. Whether we will depends on lots of factors, not all of them in our control. Still, there is a decent chance of victory. Helping him—and the troops, and the nation—achieve a successful outcome is no small thing. Surely Republicans should view it as a matter of pride to be able to provide him with that support.

Isn't that what political parties are for? Isn't that why one enters politics—to make a difference at a time of difficulty and uncertainty? Fighting for a good cause is why parties are formed and supported, and why they sometimes prove themselves deserving of loyalty. Henry Wallace and his fellow travelers abandoned Harry Truman in 1947-48. What made the modern Democratic party worth belonging to for the next generation was the fact that the majority of the party rallied behind Truman, and provided—along with public-spirited Republicans—the domestic support needed in the early years of the Cold War. (Today, alas, Henry Wallace's heirs dominate Truman's party). The reason many Americans became Republicans in recent times is that the GOP stood with Reagan (when Democrats in large measure did not) behind the policies that brought down the evil empire.

What better cause is there today, at the beginning of this new century of danger and challenge, than support for victory in a just war? The consequences of defeat would be ghastly. The prospect of victory is difficult but real. This is when a political party proves its worth.

—*William Kristol*

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Cash for Kim

From drugs to contraband to U.N. aid—the many rackets of North Korea. BY CLAUDIA ROSETT

While U.S. chief negotiator Christopher Hill has been struggling in Beijing to cut a diplomatic de-nuclearization deal with the regime of North Korean dictator Kim Jong Il, some of us here in the United States have been struggling to figure out just how much Kim's promises are worth. As ever, it's illuminating to follow the money.

So—as the U.S. government looks for ways to cajole North Korea's Dear Leader into promising to dismantle the same nuclear program that we previously rewarded him for promising not to pursue in the first place—I've been trying to put together an income statement for Kim, who lives a cosseted life of luxury as his people starve. The crib sheet for Kim's cash on the opposite page is drawn from congressional testimony, research reports, media accounts, and phone interviews. Don't bother auditing the figures. There is no way finally to reconcile all the varying estimates of North Korea's cash-generating activities. Unless someone, someday, retrieves Kim's private records from his palaces and bunkers in a future, liberated Pyongyang, we will never know the full story. But what we do know is suggestive of the depth, scope, and reach of the vast criminal enterprise that is doing business as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

North Korea itself provides no reliable information about its financial affairs, but extrapolations can be made from events such as drug busts, documented missile sales, and the like. Its basic practices are not in doubt. North Korea's regime has specialized for years in breaking every rule in the global book, and gaming every angle of the international system—an approach punctuated by missile tests and, last October, a nuclear test. But nuclear extortion is just one of Kim's many rackets.

For years, the North Korean state has been raking in money from the illicit, international sale of drugs, ranging from heroin, cocaine, and methamphetamines to fake Viagra. A North Korean defector testified to Congress in 2003 that the mass production and sale of narcotics was official state policy. In the tightly controlled North Korean state, factories turning out fake pharmaceuticals are part of Kim's plan. Some of these drugs have been peddled out of North Korean embassies by official staff. According to congressional research reports, this has resulted in more than 50 verifiable drug busts in more than 20 countries, most of them since Kim Jong Il took over from his late father in 1994.

North Korea's illicit activities also include gunrunning, illegal fishing, a dash of alleged insurance fraud, and the counterfeiting of cigarettes and U.S. currency. Lest that seem a remote problem, it's worth revisiting the April 25, 2006, congressional testimony of a former State Department official, David Asher, who worked on countering North Korea's illicit activities. To illustrate what he called "the rise of the North Korean criminal state," Asher described a North Korean and Chinese criminal network busted in a sting operation in the harbor of Atlantic City, New Jersey, in 2005. As Asher described it, the federal indictments showed that this network "was engaged in selling tens of millions of dollars per year of contraband—everything from counterfeit U.S. currency, counterfeit U.S. postage stamps, counterfeit U.S. branded cigarettes and state tax stamps, counterfeit Viagra, ecstasy, methamphetamines, heroin, AK-47s, and even attempting to sell shoulder fired missiles (manpads) and rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) into the U.S."

Estimates of Pyongyang's earnings from such enterprises vary widely. Analysts suggest that for North Korea, particular illicit enterprises go in and out of vogue. Kim's regime tends to focus on one area until it runs into too much heat or some other difficulty, and then the focus tilts to a different racket. For instance, heroin was big in the early 1990s. Then floods in 1995 and 1996 wrecked the poppy crops. The regime adapted by manufacturing and exporting more methamphetamines. (This was during the same period in which the regime's state rationing system left more than a million North Koreans to starve to death.) Poppies later made a comeback that lasted until 2003, when a North Korean ship, the *Pong Su*, carrying some 275 pounds of pure heroin, was seized off Australia.

The next North Korean racket to grab attention was the counterfeiting of U.S. currency. This finally brought crackdowns from the Treasury and the Feds resulting in such actions as the seizure of $2 million in North Korean-made counterfeit banknotes last year in the port of Los Angeles, and the freezing in 2005 of $24 million of North Korea's money in the Banco Delta Asia in Macau (where Kim's eldest son, Kim Jong Nam, likes to go for gambling and R&R).

In recent years, Kim's regime has been wallowing in profits on counterfeit cigarettes. A tobacco industry study in 2005 estimated the gross revenues from these sales to be $520 to $720 million per year. (Cigarette smuggling is highly profitable because a pack costs just pennies to produce; most of the retail price is excise taxes.) Though North Korean refugees find it almost impossible to reach the United States, North Korean contraband fares better. In testimony before a Senate panel last year, a State Department official dealing with drug enforcement, Peter Prahar, referred to federal indictments alleging that North Korea-sourced

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Dear Leader's Cash Flow

	per year unless noted
Missile Sales	$100+ million
Counterfeiting	
- Dollars	$15-25 million
- Cigarettes (gross rev.)	$520-720 million
Drug Smuggling	$100-200 million
Alleged Payoffs for Peace	$100-500 million
Illegal Tuna Fishing	$22 million
State-Controlled Tourism	$980 million
Gold Sales (2006)	$30 million
Remittances	$95+ million
Aid	
- From UN agencies	$2 billion+ since '96
- From China, South Korea	Billions in recent years
- From the U.S.	$1 billion+
Non-Criminal Exports	$1 billion+
Petty Cash/Miscellaneous	
- Billked from Saddam during Oil-for-Food	
- Counterfeit U.S. Postal Stamps	
- U.S. Fees Paid for War-Remains Searching	
- Forced Labor	
- Misc. Smuggling: Conflict Diamonds, Rhino Horn, Ivory	
- Gunrunning	
- Pending Reinsurance Claims	

- Missile Sales: Believed to vary widely by year
- Counterfeiting - Dollars: $45 million detected in circulation, including $2 million seized last year in the port of Los Angeles
- Drug Smuggling: Including heroin, methamphetamine, and fake Viagra
- Alleged Payoffs for Peace: From South Korea, supposedly part of 2000 summit deal that won former South Korean President Kim Dae Jung a Nobel Peace Prize
- State-Controlled Tourism: 1998 to present (for just one South Korean-run resort in North Korea)
- Gold Sales (2006): Criminal synergy: Mining done by forced labor.
- Aid - From UN agencies: Food, fuel and medical supplies, mostly under "Agreed Framework" nuclear freeze deal of 1994 (some via the U.N.)
- Aid - From the U.S.: A tidy $10 million from failed missile-sales talks
- Petty Cash/Miscellaneous - Billked from Saddam during Oil-for-Food: $700 worth netted in one raid
- Petty Cash/Miscellaneous - Forced Labor: Including in Russian logging camps and factories in Poland and the Czech Republic

EXPENSES: Nuclear-weapons program costing hundreds of millions annually; missile R&D; military estimated to cost $5.2 billion or more per year; $24 million worth of Swiss watches imported during the 1990s famine; some $12 million a year in Euro-luxuries (mink coats, Mercedes and BMWs, furniture, sporting goods, French china); cognac, pleasure palaces, villas abroad, cronies at home.

counterfeit cigarettes had been entering the United States at a rate of one 40-foot container per month

North Korea also sells missiles and missile technology, not always illicitly. Estimating the income from the traffic is, once again, extremely difficult. A number often cited is $560 million in sales for the year 2001 alone. A former Pentagon aide and author of a book on North Korea's negotiating strategy, Chuck Downs, explains that this was the amount North Korean officials presented to the Clinton administration around 2000 as the cost of giving up their missile traffic—so it is probably inflated. But in selling missiles and missile technology over the years to such places as Venezuela, Egypt, Libya, Pakistan, Syria, and Iran, North Korea has by some educated guesses earned $1 billion or more.

A number of seasoned observers of North Korea, including American Enterprise Institute scholar Nicholas Eberstadt, estimate that, in his commerce with the world, Kim faces a shortfall of about $1 billion per year, which he makes up with criminal activities of one kind or another. Over the past dozen years, China, South Korea, and even the United States have poured billions' worth of aid into North Korea. By many accounts, much of that has ended up supporting the government rather than feeding the hungry. And none of it has swayed the basic criminal bent of Kim's regime. Instead, we have the bizarre spectacle in which U.N. agencies purport to be dishing out food and instructing North Koreans in the rudiments of development, while down the road North Koreans as part of state policy are cranking out top-quality counterfeit U.S. banknotes and tooling missile and nuclear bomb components.

Clearly there is no dearth of entrepreneurial talent in North Korea. But under this regime, the name of the game is violence, fakery, and extortion. The fate of any promise offered by Kim Jong Il is perhaps best summed up by a look at his cash. The list above is necessarily approximate and incomplete, but the bottom line is clear. ♦

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Master of the Senate

Mitch McConnell runs rings around Harry Reid.

BY FRED BARNES

What prompted Senate majority leader Harry Reid to think he could outmaneuver Republican minority leader Mitch McConnell on which Iraq war resolutions would be voted on is anybody's guess. Reid never had a chance, and he lost badly. The media played the story as a simple case of Republicans, led by McConnell, blocking a debate on the Iraq war that was certain to be dominated by war critics. But that's not what happened—not even close.

Republicans were, in fact, ready for the ballyhooed week of debate that would include votes on two resolutions. Democrats would get a vote on their anti-President Bush, antiwar resolution. McConnell insisted Republicans be given a vote on the resolution of their choice. That resolution, authored by Senator Judd Gregg of New Hampshire, promised to continue the funding of troops in Iraq.

Reid and Democrats panicked at the thought of having to vote for or against this measure, which didn't express an opinion on Bush's "surge" of 21,500 more troops in Iraq or on the war itself. Voting for the Gregg resolution would make it more difficult for Democrats to cut off funding later. They'd look like flip-floppers. But if they voted against it, they could be accused of not supporting the troops. So Reid refused to allow a vote on the Gregg resolution. McConnell responded by mounting a Republican filibuster Democrats couldn't overcome. And the Senate was prevented from proceeding with its planned week of debate on the Iraq war.

That Republicans won this encounter should have been clear to everyone. A poisonous debate on Iraq, attracting massive press coverage that was bound to be unfavorable to Bush and his war plans, was averted. Democrats were denied the headline they craved, "Senate Rebuffs Bush on Iraq." And Republicans sent a message that they wouldn't be pushed around by Reid and the Democrats. A more succinct way of putting all this is that McConnell won and Reid lost.

"Our goal was not to kill the Iraq resolutions," McConnell says. "Our goal was to have the debate, but in a manner that was fair to both sides." To McConnell, fairness meant Reid could not impose his will on Republicans.

"Our goal was not to kill the Iraq resolutions," McConnell says. "Our goal was to have the debate, but in a manner that was fair to both sides." To McConnell, fairness meant Reid could not impose his will on Republicans and determine which of their resolutions would be voted on. (For the Republican resolution, Reid favored the one authored by Senator John McCain that defended President Bush's troop buildup in Iraq but set rigid benchmarks the Iraqi government must meet.) As it turned out, Reid clumsily overreached. Without much trouble, McConnell collected enough Republican votes, plus Democratic senator Joe Lieberman's, to block Reid's gambit.

On Iraq and every other issue, the struggle in the closely divided Senate comes down to this: McConnell understands the situation and knows how to deal with it far better than Reid does. Republicans are the minority, 49 to 51, but the minority has advantages in the Senate. "The Senate is built for defense," McConnell says. "The House is built for offense."

The key tool in the hands of the Senate minority is the filibuster, which allows unlimited debate if 41 senators reject cloture, which shuts off debate after 30 hours. "If you have 41, you can dictate the process," McConnell says. "If you don't have 41, you get rolled." McConnell intends to keep Republicans from being rolled. So far, he and Republicans have defeated all four Democratic efforts to halt debate.

"There are two things you can do with 41 or more dissenters," according to McConnell. You can block a bill or a resolution or you can "shape" it. In the Iraq debate, McConnell wanted to shape the outcome, not bar a vote on resolutions. He and Republican senators had come up with five separate resolutions. But the cleverly drafted Gregg resolution stood out. It said, "Congress should not take any action that will endanger United States military forces in the field, including the elimination or reduction of funds."

"That created a unique dilemma," says McConnell. Because Democrats were wary of voting against the Gregg resolution, it was likely to gain more votes than the antiwar, anti-surge resolution. Indeed, it was expected to get more than the 60 votes required for passage. Thus it might overshadow the Democratic

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resolution. Under the circumstances, Reid and Democrats decided no resolution and no debate would be preferable to allowing this one to pass.

Even so, Reid was not spared the embarrassment of being asked by Gregg, on the Senate floor, if he would vote for "my resolution." Reid dodged the issue. "I don't think I have to make that judgment now," he said. "Because the judgment, I say to my friend from New Hampshire, is not some diversionary matter. The issue before this body and the issue before the American people—that's why we're getting hundreds of phone calls in my office and other Senate offices around the country—the issue is, Does the Senate support the president's surge?"

McConnell, after a dozen years of Republican rule in the Senate, has schooled Republicans on how to operate effectively as a minority. He recruited Martin Gold, an expert on minority rights in the Senate, to advise senators and their staff. The filibuster that stopped the Iraq debate, Gold says, "was a very early and very important test of whether the McConnell minority would stand up for itself or whether it would fracture." It showed Republicans would "not be railroaded."

They weren't railroaded when a bill boosting the federal minimum wage to $7.25 an hour reached the Senate floor in January. Democrats wanted a "clean" bill with only the wage hike. Republicans wanted tax cuts for small businesses that would be affected by the higher wage. Reid tried twice to halt debate and failed. So tax relief was added to the minimum wage bill. Republicans also used the filibuster to have a say on congressional ethics reform. McConnell mustered 46 votes to block the shutoff of the ethics debate.

McConnell wants a role in shaping the House-passed energy bill too, once it reaches the Senate. But he is bent on killing the legislation, already approved by the House, that would have the federal government negotiate drug prices in the Medicare prescription drug benefit program. "We're going to kill that proudly," he says. "It won't be a question of shaping."

The filibuster, even in the hands of as skilled a Senate leader as McConnell, has its limits. For instance, it won't help Republicans win confirmation of federal appeals courts nominees. "There's no easy way to extract nominees from committee," he says. The last three presidents got on average 17 appeals court nominees approved in their final two years, while facing a Senate ruled by the opposite party, McConnell says. To be fair, Democrats should allow at least that number to be confirmed now, he argues.

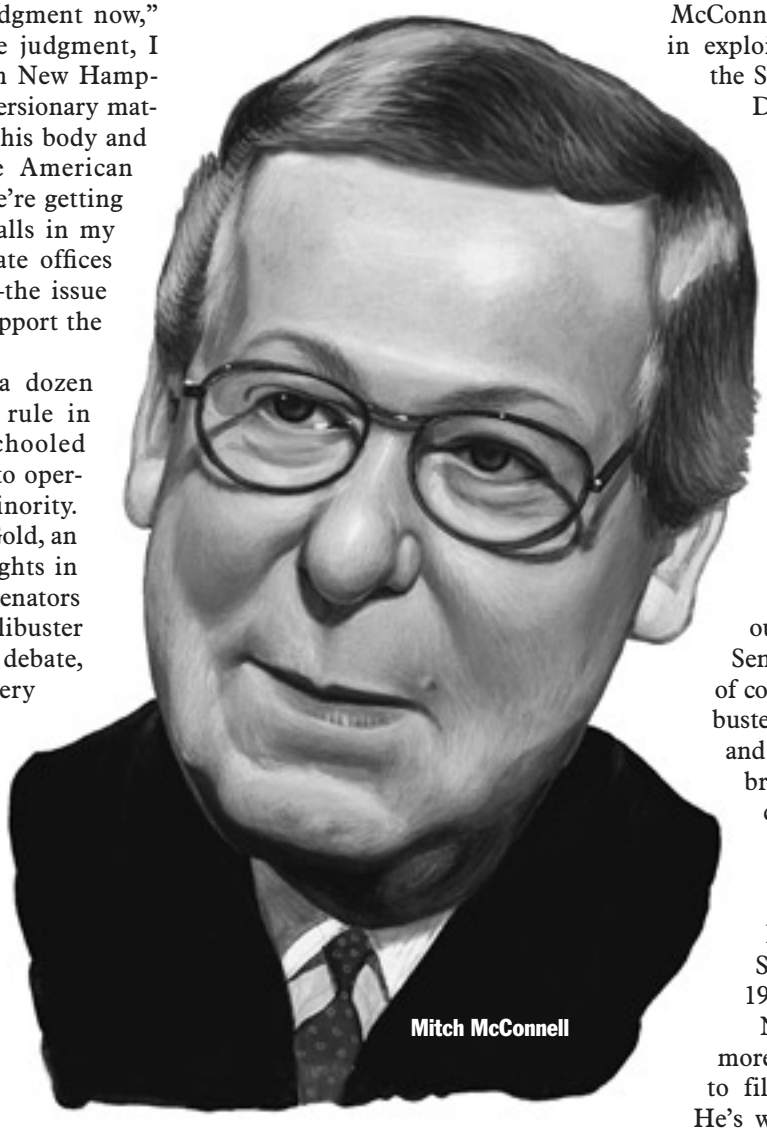
Mitch McConnell

Illustration by Earl Keleny

McConnell's first major venture in exploiting minority rights in the Senate came in 1994 when Democrats still had a majority. A campaign finance reform bill that would have imposed public financing on congressional races had passed both houses of Congress. McConnell consulted Senate secretary Elizabeth Letchworth to find out if there were any options left to block the legislation.

Letchworth told him three motions must be passed before conferees can be dispatched to iron out differences between the Senate and House bills. But of course nobody had ever filibustered those motions before, and she recommended against breaking new ground. That didn't stop McConnell. He succeeded in blocking the second motion. The bill died. Six weeks later, Republicans captured the Senate and House in the 1994 landslide.

Now, in the minority once more, McConnell is prepared to filibuster conferees again. He's wary of what might happen in a Senate-House conference on the minimum wage increase. The House passed a hike with no tax relief, and he doesn't want the Senate conferees to go along with that.

"We'll have to have a discussion of what might come out" of the conference, McConnell says. "That will be a lengthy and interesting discussion." In all likelihood, McConnell will get his way. ♦

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Sanctions Against Iran Would Work

Too bad they won't be tried.

BY OLIVIER GUITTA

After nearly four years of fruitless negotiations between the EU-3 (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) and Iran over the nuclear issue, the U.N. Security Council on December 23 passed Resolution 1737. It imposed limited, almost meaningless, sanctions on the mullahs' regime. But it also set a clock ticking: If Iran has not agreed to suspend its enrichment of uranium by February 21, the Security Council may contemplate more severe sanctions.

The evidence that sanctions could work is significant. Consider the economic picture inside Iran. A roughly 100-page report prepared by the foreign affairs and defense commission of the *Majlis*, the Iranian parliament, and dated September 2006 was recently leaked to the French daily *Le Monde*. The report analyzes the economic and social consequences of potential international sanctions. The product of six months' intensive discussion among economists and oil specialists, it was circulated at the highest levels of the regime, and to president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

The report underscores the vulnerability of the Iranian economy—especially the oil sector—to sanctions. At first glance, it might seem that a country with the second-largest gas and oil reserves in the world has nothing to worry about. But as the report notes, 85 percent of Iran's revenue comes from the sale of oil abroad. At the same time, Iran imports most of the refined products it uses, like gasoline. Iran consumes half a million barrels of petroleum products per day, of which 40 percent is imported, at a cost of $3 to 4 billion a year. In the last few years, Iran's consumption of petroleum products has increased 10 percent per annum, putting added pressure on the oil sector. Rising consumption should come as no surprise, given population growth and the government-subsidized price of gasoline, among the lowest in the world at 800 rials a liter, or about 33 cents a gallon. Iran exports 2.5 million barrels of oil a day (3 percent of world consumption). An embargo on these exports would have a great impact, though it would not be felt for at least a year.

Heightening the vulnerability of the Iranian economy to sanctions is the fact that half of its imports come from Western countries, including 40 percent from the European Union. In the event of sanctions, the bulk of Iranian industry would be paralyzed after just three to four months. Iran would lose between $1.5 and $2 billion in annual revenue. Not surprisingly, the authors of the report note: "It is important to delay any measures which could affect the population because of the risks of instability."

The *Majlis* report recommends "making every political effort to prevent the imposition of sanctions, while protecting the interests of the country and the national honor." It mentions that Iran can use economic leverage with countries that depend on it for oil (Japan, China) and "political and military dissuasion" with others.

An embargo would destabilize Iran's economy and weaken its rate of exchange, while discouraging private investment. As a result, the report says, Iran "would be forced to modify its national priorities, and to devote the bulk of its resources to preventing major social upheaval, which could cause a deterioration of living standards for an important part of the population." It also insists on the need to continue threatening Western nations with a "cold winter," a way of stressing that rising oil prices would have a huge negative impact on Western economies.

The report amounts to a warning to the regime that it could not withstand major economic pressure, because of the structural weaknesses of the Iranian economy and its fragile financial situation. According to the report, "the members of the regime who were interviewed by the commission indicated that any deterioration of the economic situation could cause social disturbances that would weaken domestic stability." Interestingly, the commission seems to distance itself from the hard line personified by President Ahmadinejad. It concludes that the simultaneous freezing of Iranian reserves abroad, imposition of an embargo on Iranian crude exports, and a ban on refined petroleum imports would plunge Iran into a deep hole both economically and socially. The implication is that sanctions could seriously weaken the regime.

Unrelated confirmation that isolating Iran might be an effective policy comes from the French experience in the late 1980s. Knowing of Iranian involvement in 11 terrorist bombings in the streets of Paris between December 1985 and September 1986, Jacques Chirac, then prime minister, decided to act. Longtime Chirac observer Franz-Olivier Giesbert, in his biography of Mitterrand, quotes Chirac as speaking contemptuously of the mullahs: "Like all people, Iranians hate losing face. They have their dignity. So if you treat them like chimpanzees . . . " And, "as long as you behave like savages, we will not have diplomatic relations with you."

France severed diplomatic ties with Iran on July 17, 1987. Less than a year later, on June 16, 1988, it restored relations—after five French hostages in Lebanon (kidnapped by Iran's proxy,

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A 1986 bombing in Paris: Iran's role in such attacks finally provoked Jacques Chirac.

Hezbollah) had been freed, attacks on French soil had ceased, and Tehran had sought a rapprochement. In that instance, French firmness worked. Apparently Tehran was unwilling to be cast as a pariah on the international scene, preferring to compromise to regain its honor.

There's no reason it wouldn't do so today—if it were actually forced into a corner. For either economic or diplomatic isolation to be fully effective, however, every major nation would have to be on board. And the prospects of this are getting dimmer by the day.

It is clear that Russia and China went along with Resolution 1737 only because its sanctions were so mild. In addition, none other than France is now going wobbly. While official French policy remains that a nuclear-armed Iran is unacceptable, President Chirac—who a year ago was leading the effort to secure a tough condemnation of Iran by the U.N. or, failing that, the E.U.—gives every indication of rejecting serious sanctions. While he tried to explain away as an off-the-record slip his statement on January 29 that he could live with one or two Iranian bombs (the real problem, he said, is proliferation), he made the statement in a recorded interview with the *New York Times* and other major publications. And there are grounds to believe that this backtracking reflects a good deal more than presidential inadvertence.

First, there is France's alliance with the Gulf monarchies. In the late 1990s, France signed treaties with the United Arab Emirates and Qatar obligating it to intervene militarily to defend these countries. Naturally, in the tense atmosphere of the region, the Gulf states are worried about Iran. Last year, the Saudi daily *Al Riyadh* reported that the leaders of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, angered by Qatar's alliance with the United States and allegedly Israel, were threatening to attack Qatari oil and gas facilities by sea and air should a military confrontation occur between the United States and Iran over the nuclear crisis. In any such case, France would be treaty-bound to send troops to the region to retaliate against Iran. Qatari diplomats have been reminding France of its commitments. Such intervention is surely not a prospect Chirac enjoys; so toning town the rhetoric towards Tehran is de rigueur.

Second, Lebanon. Chirac is obsessed with the Lebanese imbroglio, for a number of reasons. Rafik Hariri, the former prime minister of Lebanon assassinated on February 14, 2005, was a close friend of his. Then, too, France has soldiers in the UNIFIL contingent in south Lebanon. And Iran has threatened to renew Hezbollah attacks in France itself if the French take a harsh stance against it at the Security Council. Relations between Hezbollah and France have been rocky in the past few months, and Chirac is probably seeking to avoid provocation.

Third, French business interests in Iran are huge: a staggering $35 billion in investments, excluding the oil company Total's contracts (Total has invested over $4 billion in Iran). France is Iran's second-largest source of imports (after Germany), claiming 8.3 percent of the country's total imports. Also, numerous French multinationals have entered the Iranian market in the past two years. Renault, the leading French automaker, for instance, has invested $2 billion in a joint venture with two Iranian automakers that will be Renault's second-largest operation in the world, turning out as many as 300,000 cars a year. In the event of economic sanctions, French companies would be hit hard. Chirac is surely taking this into account.

Whatever his reasons, it appears that even Chirac—until recently, one of the toughest on Iran—is giving up. Indeed, it may be that much of the world is resigned to letting Iran have nuclear weapons. But this cannot be the last word, given the stakes—the risk of losing the war on jihadist Islam and enduring a nuclear terror attack. If the United States and/or Israel are pushed to act militarily, some of the blame will belong in Paris as well as in Moscow and Beijing. ♦

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The Trouble with Traumatology

Is it advocacy or is it science?

BY SALLY SATEL

Last month a series of letters appeared in *Science*. They were written in response to a study by trauma researchers at Columbia University who examined the extent of long-term stress in Vietnam veterans.

When it was published last August, the Columbia article made headlines because it concluded that the psychological fallout from the Vietnam war was considerably less than previously thought. In short, it claimed that a "landmark" 1988 report—the National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study—had overstated the prevalence of residual post-traumatic stress disorder.

As is usually the case with letters to the editor, some of the correspondence was critical. But it was not the work of the Columbia team that the *Science* letters contested. Instead, they were aimed at Richard McNally, a professor of psychology at Harvard, who wrote the accompanying editorial.

His fault, in the critics' eyes, was to dismiss the possibility that non-infantry soldiers could have been exposed to wartime trauma. In fact, he said no such thing, as his published reply made clear. And elsewhere he had plainly acknowledged that certain support roles could put soldiers in harm's way. But McNally struck a nerve because he was perceived as underplaying the traumatogenic nature of war and, by extension, the vast potential for psychopathology—and victim status—among returning troops.

Sally Satel is a psychiatrist and coauthor, with Christina Hoff Sommers, of One Nation Under Therapy. *She is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.*

The epistolary tension between McNally and his critics may seem like routine academic back-and-forth. But it goes deeper. The letters represent a slice of a larger conflict within traumatology. It is a discipline in turmoil, torn apart by the passions of political advocacy on one side and the principles of scientific method on the other.

This dynamic was on more colorful display just last November at the annual meeting of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies, the leading association of trauma specialists. At a symposium called "Controversies Surrounding the Psychological Risks of Vietnam for U.S. Veterans: Multiple Perspectives on New Evidence," McNally walked the audience through his own analysis of the proportion of Vietnam veterans afflicted with post-traumatic stress disorder. (Because he was out of the country giving a long-planned lecture, McNally's talk was "presented" as a DVD of him giving a lecture on his reanalysis. I watched the DVD and listened to a recording of the symposium.)

Before getting to McNally's scientific presentation, a little background is in order. The Columbia study that appeared in *Science* in August 2006 was a reanalysis of data from a 1988 study mandated by Congress to determine the degree of psychological stress among Vietnam veterans. Known as the National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study (NVVRS), it put the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder at 15.2 percent of all men who had served in Vietnam. This figure was for cases at the time the study was conducted, between 1986 and 1988—well more than a decade after the subjects had come home from the war.

The Columbia reanalysis found a more plausible estimate of post-traumatic stress disorder to be 9.1 percent. McNally applauded the rigor of the Columbia reanalysis but went a step further. He believed the true estimate was even lower, more like 5 percent.

McNally's main contention was that the Columbia team used too lenient a definition of "impairment" in assigning a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder to veterans. (Impairment must be present before a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder can be made.) By recalibrating the definition of impairment, McNally found the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder to be 5.4 percent among men who served in Vietnam. At last November's meeting he took the audience through the numbers.

After hearing McNally's presentation, three leading traumatologists, one of whom was a coauthor of the 1988 study, began their invited commentaries. All politely noted ambiguities in the data that may have led the Columbia team to reduce the post-traumatic stress disorder prevalence more than they believed was warranted, but none pressed the point.

Then they turned their guns on McNally. "I want to thank Rich for his anecdotes," said the NVVRS coauthor in his introductory remarks, implying, of course, that while he himself did *science*, McNally merely told stories. The three commentators—one was an adviser to the 1988 study—spoke of the "spin" McNally put on his "misleading" and "immoderate" presentation. They issued impassioned pleas for "accurate" and "responsible" research, clearly implying that McNally's was neither.

The president of the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies was one of the three commentators. He virtually accused McNally of lying. "What I would like to do," he told the audience, "is to swear Rich and other critics in under oath to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. If that were done

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you would have seen an entirely different presentation, I think."

During the commentaries there were ripples of approving laughter from the audience. At least one person, however, found the atmosphere so unsettling that he asked aloud, "Is Rich McNally the Anti-Christ?"

Ad hominem remarks aside, none of the panelists made a single mention of McNally's methodology. This was remarkable because McNally's reworking of the data was the centerpiece of his presentation. The proportion of veterans afflicted was the sole policy-relevant aspect of the National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study; it was the very reason Congress mandated the study.

Curiously, too, none of the panelists directed any criticism toward the Columbia team. In fact, they praised its work lavishly. Why assail only McNally when the Columbia analysis also resulted in a significant drop in estimated post-traumatic stress disorder?

One reason was that McNally was already in their cross-hairs for being a member of a vocal cadre of psychologists and historians of military psychiatry who insisted that the original estimate made by the NVVRS—namely, that 15 percent of troops had chronic post-traumatic stress disorder—was too high. How, they asked, could the prevalence be equal to the percentage of men assigned to combat, also 15 percent? This suggested, implausibly, that most infantrymen had developed cases of post-traumatic stress disorder that had lasted more than a decade.

The Columbia team, by comparison, expressed no particular doubts. It undertook the reanalysis because trying to resolve the controversy impressed the researchers as a scientifically important matter, especially so, they believed, in light of a new generation of soldiers returning from combat in Iraq.

The McNally affair is a set piece in the sociology of science, a backdrop against which heated reaction to unpopular inquiry exposes the troubled state of an academic enterprise. The hostility towards a colleague and the complete failure to engage the novel and data-driven assertion he has made—indeed, the only truly new finding presented during the entire panel—reveal traumatology to be a field in crisis.

This is no secret of course. The raging controversy over repressed memories of child abuse—which reached a fever pitch in the mid-1980s and '90s—gave the field a self-inflicted black eye. That scandal ruined the lives of many patients and their families. The current tension over the National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study numbers, it is true, is far less sensational than "recovered memory therapy." But the tempest swirling around the NVVRS is a sorry episode in its own right, destructive to the conduct and culture of inquiry. It shows, as McNally has put it, how vigorously "the advocacy tail can wag the scientific dog" in the world of trauma research. ♦

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Oil's Not Well in Iraq

But it's not too late to fix the problem.

BY MICHAEL MAKOVSKY

On March 27, 2003, Paul Wolfowitz, then deputy secretary of defense, predicted that Iraq's oil revenue would "finance" its reconstruction and do so "relatively soon." With wise investment and management, Wolfowitz might have been right. Even though its oil sector accounts for 95 percent of the Iraqi state's revenue and is essential to the country's ability to one day pay its own way, the United States has yet to make a serious effort to boost the Iraqi oil industry, which controls the second or third largest reserves (mostly undeveloped) in the world. President George W. Bush's recent Iraq plan is no better in this regard.

Despite Iraq's violence and political difficulties, its oil revenue has grown about 30 percent each year since 2004, topping $30 billion in 2006. This achievement, however, was due mostly to high oil prices, which, as the recent broad price drop indicates, cannot be counted on in the future. According to State Department figures, production has been stagnant at 2.1 million barrels per day, or 400,000 barrels per day below the immediate prewar peak (which was matched for a few months in 2004). The shortfall from even this modest target represents a loss of over $7 billion annually (based on $50 per barrel of Iraqi oil) and about 15 percent of unused, or spare, global oil production capacity (a significant amount in a still tight market).

Many in and out of government accept the conventional wisdom that security problems are to blame. Indeed, security problems have contributed to smuggling and irregular oil exporting through the north to Turkey, as well as limited refining and uneven distribution of gasoline and other petroleum products. And certainly if violence were to spread to the southern oil facilities, Iraq could suffer a longstanding loss of significant oil production and exports.

But putting all the blame on security is mistaken. To illustrate this error simply, there have been few attacks in the south, where over 80 percent of Iraqi oil is produced, and yet oil production and exports there have been generally stagnant for over three years.

Blaming the lack of security masks the serious problem of poor Iraqi and U.S. management of vital oil projects. Most notably, Iraq's overwhelmed and centralized bureaucracy, increasingly fearful of accusations of corruption, has managed to spend only a fraction of the Iraqi funds available for oil projects in the past couple of years. Through underinvestment, the United States also hobbled initial efforts to improve Iraq's oil revenue, despite the potential for even small upgrades in Iraq's oil sector to result in spectacular financial returns for the Iraqis. Fears that a more assertive policy would fuel conspiracy theories and upset Iraq's oil-exporting neighbors (who are supposedly worried that a resurgence of Iraqi oil production would oversupply the market and reduce their market share) has led Washington to seek only to restore facilities to their prewar condition. In contrast, after many years of watching their country's oil capacity decline because of war, sanctions, and looting, several senior Iraqi oil officials sought to boost oil production and exports. Too bad this point of view was not more widely shared. Some U.S. and Coalition Provisional Authority officials have seemed to believe the oil industry does not need much funding at all. And what little funding has been allocated has been interrupted by delays and contracting procedures, when not mismanaged or spent to import fuel. The result has been a practice of underinvestment in a sector that should be yielding enormous financial returns.

The past notwithstanding, the Bush administration should bring greater focus to this issue. The White House views oil primarily as a political vehicle to unite Iraqis instead of as a means to advance Iraq's economy and self-sufficiency. In his January 10 address, Bush limited discussion of oil to the question of equitable revenue-sharing and Iraq's need for a good law to bring that about. Perhaps such a law will contribute to national political reconciliation, but the issues involved are very complex, and agreement and implementation could take far longer than the media and perhaps even the White House imagine.

There needs to be, however, not one oil law but a multilaw hydrocarbon regime to address not only revenue-sharing but also foreign investment, taxation, contracting, the establishment of a decision-making federal petroleum committee, and the reestablishment of Iraqi national oil companies, among other vital matters. Revenue-sharing might be part of the horse-trading, but its resolution should not be a precondition for addressing every other issue. For any such agreements to become law under Iraq's constitution, a draft law must pass through the Council of Ministers and then Parliament. If any constitutional amendments are required to accommodate any new oil laws, the process will go on even longer.

While this whole process plays out, the Iraqi oil sector will continue to deteriorate, to the short- and long-term detriment of Iraq's ability to become self-sufficient. Iraqi oil stag-

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Reuters / Ali Abu Shish

A worker stands in front of a new oil refinery in Najaf, October 7, 2006

nation or decline will also contribute a bullish element to the global oil market, which is certainly not constructive to U.S. economic or strategic interests.

Thus, the U.S. government should be looking beyond the politics of Iraqi oil to help Iraq pursue the economic advantages of developing its oil sector. Here are some practical ways the United States can help.

• First, Washington should work to bolster necessary Iraqi and U.S. technical expertise in Baghdad. The number of excellent Iraqi oil officials, many of whom trained abroad, is quickly dwindling because of age, security, and ministry politicization. The United States needs to encourage the Ministry of Oil to hire outside experts in contracting, project management, security, and other important areas, and integrate them into its bureaucracy just as Russian, Saudi, and other national oil companies have hired foreign experts. Likewise, the U.S. State Department must rely less on diplomats and more on private sector experts to run and reform its reconstruction operations. Broadly, State should withdraw generalist civilian ministerial advisers in favor of targeted industry experts, to whom the Iraqis will be more likely to listen.

• Second, Washington should hike its funding for training Iraqi oil officials beyond the current $2.5 million managed by the Trade and Development Agency, and conduct extensive training in the United States as some senior Iraqi oil officials have requested. Most training is conducted elsewhere in the Mideast because of cost and U.S. visa difficulties. But it would better serve U.S. interests to train future Iraqi oil leaders here, where they can improve their English, study our ways, and develop relationships with a range of U.S. oil executives and government officials. Russia, Britain, China, and others have hosted hundreds of Iraqi oil officials for extended training in their home countries.

• Third, the United States should facilitate the expenditure of additional funds to increase Iraqi oil production, export, and storage capacity, particularly in the south. Some projects, such as oil well refurbishments, can quickly bring superb returns. Of course, the Iraqis must spend some of their own money, but the United States must not wait for that to happen. Whatever the Iraqis do not spend now, they will certainly need later anyway.

• Fourth, the United States ought to dedicate more resources to infrastructure security in the south, which suffers fewer attacks than the center or north but is far more important to the oil industry. While the United States can help with money and personnel, Iraq must take overall responsibility for infrastructure security and bring in private contractors to help with training and guarding key facilities—the cost of which will be offset by the extra oil revenue generated.

The Iraqis must take the lead in developing and securing their highly promising oil industry. But the United States should provide targeted guidance and assistance, so that Iraq can generate greater revenue in the near and long term. That remains an essential condition for reviving and stabilizing Iraq and finally reducing its dependency on the U.S. military and taxpayer. ♦

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Iran's Obsession with the Jews

Denying the Holocaust, desiring another one

By Matthias Küntzel

On December 12, 2006, Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad personally brought to a close the infamous Holocaust deniers' conference in Tehran. A strange parade of speakers had passed across the podium: former Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke, the nutty followers of the anti-Zionist Jewish sect Neturei Karta, and officials of the neo-Nazi German National party, along with the familiar handful of professional Holocaust deniers. Frederick Töben had delivered a lecture entitled "The Holocaust—A Murder Weapon." Frenchman Robert Faurisson had called the Holocaust a "fairy tale," while his American colleague Veronica Clark had explained that "the Jews made money in Auschwitz." A professor named McNally had declared that to regard the Holocaust as a fact is as ludicrous as believing in "magicians and witches." Finally, the Belgian Leonardo Clerici had offered the following explanation in his capacity as a Muslim: "I believe that the value of metaphysics is greater than the value of history."

If this motley crew had assembled in a pub in Melbourne, nobody would have paid the slightest attention. What gave the event historical significance was that it was held by invitation, at the Iranian foreign ministry: on government premises, in a country that disposes of the world's second-largest oil reserves (after Saudi Arabia) and second-largest natural gas reserves (after Russia). And in this setting, the remarks quoted above provoked not dismissive laughter, but applause and attentive nods. On the walls hung photographs of corpses with the inscription "Myth," and others of laughing concentration camp survivors with the inscription "Truth."

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The Tehran deniers' conference marks a turning point not only because of its state sponsorship, but also because of its purpose. Up until now, Holocaust deniers have wanted to revise the past. Today, they want to shape the future: to prepare the way for the next Holocaust.

In his opening speech to the conference, the Iranian foreign minister, Manucher Mottaki, left no doubt on this point: If "the official version of the Holocaust is called into question," Mottaki said, then "the nature and identity of Israel" must also be called into question. The purpose of denying, among all the Nazis' war measures, specifically the persecution of the Jews is to undermine a central motive for the establishment of the state of Israel. Auschwitz is delegitimized in order to legitimize the elimination of Israel—that is, a second genocide. If it should turn out, however, that the Holocaust did happen after all, Ahmadinejad explains that it would have been a result of European policies, and any homeland for the Jews would belong not in Palestine but in Europe. Either way, the result is the same: Israel must vanish.

This focus explains why the conference's sponsors attached so much importance to the participation of a delegation from the Jewish sect Neturei Karta. Although it does not deny the Holocaust, the sect welcomes the destruction of Israel. That objective was the common denominator uniting all the participants in the conference. In his closing speech, Ahmadinejad formulated it with perfect clarity: "The life-curve of the Zionist regime has begun its descent, and it is now on a downward slope towards its fall. . . . The Zionist regime will be wiped out, and humanity will be liberated."

Holocaust denial and the nuclear program

Just as Hitler sought to "liberate" humanity by murdering the Jews, so Ahmadinejad believes he can "liberate" humanity by eradicating Israel. The deniers' conference as an instrument for propagating this project is intimately linked to the nuclear program as an instrument for realizing it. Five years ago, in December 2001, former Iranian president Hashemi Rafsanjani first boasted that "the use of even one nuclear bomb inside

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Israel will destroy everything," whereas the damage to the Islamic world of a potential retaliatory nuclear attack could be limited: "It is not irrational to contemplate such an eventuality." While the Islamic world could sacrifice hundreds of thousands of "martyrs" in an Israeli retaliatory strike without disappearing—so goes Rafsanjani's argument—Israel would be history after the first bomb.

It is precisely this suicidal outlook that distinguishes the Iranian nuclear weapons program from those of all other countries and makes it uniquely dangerous. As long ago as 1980, Khomeini put it this way: "We do not worship Iran, we worship Allah. For patriotism is another name for paganism. I say let this land [Iran] burn. I say let this land go up in smoke, provided Islam emerges triumphant in the rest of the world."

Anyone inclined to dismiss the significance of such statements might want to consider the proclamation made by Mohammad Hassan Rahimian, representative of the Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei, who stands even higher in the Iranian hierarchy than Ahmadinejad. A few months ago, on November 16, 2006, Rahimian explained: "The Jew"—not the Zionist, note, but the Jew—"is the most obstinate enemy of the devout. And the main war will determine the destiny of mankind. . . . The reappearance of the Twelfth Imam will lead to a war between Israel and the Shia." The country that has been the first to make Holocaust denial a principle of its foreign policy is likewise the first openly to threaten another U.N. member state with, not invasion or annexation, but annihilation.

Yet it's all confusing. Why, if Iran wishes Israel ill, does it deny the Holocaust rather than applaud it? Ahmadinejad's Holocaust denial has been especially well received in the Arab world, where it has won praise from Hezbollah, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, and Hamas. Yet in the Arab world, Hitler is admired not for building highways or conquering Paris, but for murdering Jews. How can Holocaust denial be most prevalent in a region where admiration for Hitler remains widespread? To unlock this paradox it is necessary to examine the anti-Semitic mind.

Brother Hitler and Eichmann the Martyr

Holocaust denial is anti-Semitism at its most extreme. Whoever declares Auschwitz a myth implicitly portrays the Jews as the enemy of humanity: The assumption is that the all-powerful Jews, for filthy lucre, have been duping the rest of humanity for the past 60 years. Whoever talks of the "so-called Holocaust" implies that over 90 percent of the world's media and university professorships are controlled by Jews and are thereby cut off from the "real" truth. No one who accuses Jews of such perfidy can sincerely regret Hitler's Final Solution. For this reason alone, every denial of the Holocaust contains an appeal to repeat it.

Consider this passage written by an Egyptian columnist for the state-controlled newspaper *Al-Akhbar*, Egypt's second-largest daily, and published in April 2002:

> The entire matter [of the Holocaust], as many French and British scientists and researchers have proven, is nothing more than a huge Israeli plot aimed at extorting the German government in particular and the European countries in general. But I, personally and in light of this imaginary tale, complain to Hitler, even saying to him from the bottom of my heart, "If only you had done it, brother, if only it had really happened, so that the world could sigh in relief [without] their evil and sin."

Often, however, enthusiasm for the Holocaust is expressed unvarnished. In 1961, when the trial of Adolf Eichmann dominated the headlines, such enthusiasm became evident for the first time. The Jordanian *Jerusalem Times* published an "Open Letter to Eichmann," which stated: "By liquidating six million you have . . . conferred a real blessing on humanity. . . . But the brave Eichmann can find solace in the fact that this trial will one day culminate in the liquidation of the remaining six million to avenge your blood." Arab writers such as Abdullah al-Tall eulogized "the martyr Eichmann," "who fell in the Holy War." In her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, Hannah Arendt summarized the mood in the Arab world:

> The newspapers in Damascus and Beirut, in Cairo and Jordan did not conceal either their sympathy for Eichmann or their regret that he "did not finish the job"; a radio broadcast from Cairo on the opening day of the trial even included a little sideswipe at the Germans, reproaching them for the fact that "in the last war, no German plane had ever flown over and bombed a Jewish settlement."

This heartfelt desire to see all Jews exterminated was reiterated in the Egyptian daily *Al-Akhbar* in April 2001 by the columnist Ahmad Ragab: "[Give] thanks to Hitler. He took revenge on the Israelis in advance, on behalf of the Palestinians. Our one complaint against him was that his revenge was not complete enough."

Obviously, from a logical point of view, enthusiasm for the Holocaust is incompatible with its denial. Logic, however, is beside the point. Anti-Semitism is built upon an emotional infrastructure that substitutes for reason an ephemeral combination of mutually exclusive attributions, all arising from hatred of everything Jewish. As a result, many contradictory anti-Jewish interpretations of the Holocaust can be deployed simultaneously: (1) the extermination of millions was a good thing; (2) the extermination of millions was a Zionist fabrication; (3) the Holocaust resulted from a Jewish conspiracy against Germany that Hitler thwarted and punished;

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(4) the Holocaust was a joint enterprise of the Zionists and Nazis; (5) the Zionists' "Holocaust industry" exaggerates the murder of the Jews for self-interested reasons; (6) Israeli actions against the Palestinians are the "true" Holocaust—and so on.

We are dealing here with a parallel universe in which the reality principle is ignored, and blatantly contradictory fantasies about Jews all have their place so long as they serve to reinforce anti-Semitic paranoia and hatred: a universe in which the laws of reason have been abolished and all mental energy is harnessed to the cause of anti-Semitism.

Amid the confusion, this universe is characterized by two constants: the refusal to come to terms with the facts of the Holocaust as it actually took place; and a willingness to find in the Holocaust a source of encouragement and inspiration, a precedent proving that it is possible to murder Jews by the million. This is why the precise content of Ahmadinejad's Holocaust tirades is not the issue. He is obsessed with the subject because he is fascinated by the possibility of a second Holocaust.

Why, then, did Ahmadinejad repeatedly and publicly embrace the ultra-orthodox Jews at the conference? Why did he personally greet every Jew present and say that "Zionism should be strictly separated from the Jewish faith"? Let us take a look at modern anti-Semitism in Iran.

Ahmadinejad and the Jews

Ahmadinejad's great inspiration, the Ayatollah Khomeini, not only recognized the mobilizing power of anti-Semitism in the struggle against the shah, he made use of it himself, as far back as the 1960s. "I know that you do not want Iran to lie under the boots of the Jews," he cried out to his supporters on April 13, 1963. That same year, he called the shah a Jew in disguise and accused him of taking orders from Israel. This drew a huge response from the public. Khomeini had found his theme.

Khomeini's biographer Amir Taheri writes: "The Ayatollah was by now convinced that the central political theme of contemporary life was an elaborate and highly complex conspiracy by the Jews—'who controlled everything'—to 'emasculate Islam' and dominate the world thanks to the natural wealth of the Muslim nations." When in June 1963 thousands of Khomeini-influenced theology students set off to Tehran for a demonstration and were brutally stopped by the shah's security forces, Khomeini channeled all their anger toward the Jewish nation: "Israel does not want the Koran to survive in this country. . . . It is destroying us. It is destroying you and the nation. It wants to take possession of the economy. It wants to demolish our trade and agriculture. It wants to grab the wealth of the country."

After the Six Day War of 1967, the anti-Semitic agitation, which drew no distinction between Jews and Israelis, intensified. "[I]t was [the Jews] who first established anti-Islamic propaganda and engaged in various stratagems, and as you can see, this activity continues down to the present," Khomeini wrote in 1970 in his principal work, *Islamic Government*. "[T]he Jews . . . wish to establish Jewish domination throughout the world. Since they are a cunning and resourceful group of people, I fear that . . . they may one day achieve their goal." Then in September 1977, he declared, "The Jews have grasped the world with both hands and are devouring it with an insatiable appetite, they are devouring America and have now turned their attention to Iran and still they are not satisfied." Two years later, Khomeini was the unchallenged leader of the Iranian revolution.

Khomeini's anti-Semitic attacks found favor with the opponents of the shah, both leftists and Islamists. His anti-Semitism ran along the same lines as *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, the turn-of-the-century hoax beloved of the Nazis that purports to expose a Jewish conspiracy to rule the world. *The Protocols* was published in Persian in the summer of 1978 and was widely disseminated as a weapon against the shah, Israel, and the Jews. In 1984, the newspaper *Imam*, published by the Iranian embassy in London, printed excerpts from *The Protocols*. In 1985, Iranian state authorities did a mass printing of a new edition. Somewhat later, the periodical *Eslami* serialized *The Protocols* under the title "The Smell of Blood: Jewish Conspiracies."

Just two years ago, in 2005, at the Iranian booth at the Frankfurt Book Fair, I was readily able to buy an English edition of *The Protocols* published by the Islamic Propagation Organization of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Other anti-Semitic classics were also available, such as Henry Ford's *The International Jew* and Mohammad Taqi Taqipour's screed *Tale of the "Chosen People" and the Legend of "Historical Right."* The cover of the latter volume caught my eye: a red Star of David superimposed over a grey skull and a yellow map of the world. Obviously, even after the death of Khomeini in 1989, the worldwide dissemination of anti-Semitism by Iran continued.

The fact that 25,000 Jews now live in Iran, making it the largest Jewish community in a Muslim country, is not incompatible with the foregoing. The Jews in Iran are made clearly to feel their subordinate Dhimmi status. Thus, they are not allowed to occupy higher positions than Muslims and so are disqualified from the leading ranks in politics and the military. They are not allowed to serve as witnesses in court, and Jewish schools must be managed by Muslims and stay open on the Sabbath. Books in the

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Hebrew language are forbidden. Up to the present, the regime, which has time and again published anti-Semitic texts and caricatures, has prevented such hate-mongering from resulting in violence against Jews. Nevertheless, the combination of incitement and restraint leaves the Jewish community in a state of permanent insecurity. Today, the Jewish community serves Ahmadinejad not only as an alibi in his power game, but also increasingly as a deterrent: In the event of an Israeli attack on Iranian nuclear facilities, this community would find itself hostage and vulnerable to acts of reprisal.

Irrespective of the leeway that Ahmadinejad has, for the time being, left the Iranian Jews, his rhetoric is steeped in an anti-Semitism that is unprecedented for a state leader since World War II. Ahmadinejad does not say "Jews" are conspiring to rule the world. He says, "Two thousand Zionists want to rule the world." He says, "The Zionists" have for 60 years now blackmailed "all Western governments." "The Zionists have imposed themselves on a substantial portion of the banking, financial, cultural, and media sectors." "The Zionists" fabricated the Danish Muhammad cartoons. "The Zionists" are responsible for the destruction of the dome of the Golden Mosque in Iraq.

The pattern is familiar. Ahmadinejad is not a racist social Darwinist who, Hitler-like, wants to eliminate every last trace of "Jewish blood." The term "half-Jew" is not used in Islamist discourse. But he invests the word "Zionist" with exactly the same meaning Hitler poured into "Jew": the incarnation of evil.

The Iranian regime can court the Jewish Israel-haters of Neturei Karta all it wants, but anyone who makes Jews responsible for the ills of the world—whether calling them Judas or Zionists—is clearly driven by an anti-Semitism of genocidal potential. Demonization of Jews, Holocaust denial, and the will to eliminate Israel—these are the three elements of an ideological constellation that collapses as soon as any one of them is removed.

Ahmadinejad inhabits a delusional world that is sealed off from reality. The louder the liberal West protests against Holocaust denial or the Islamists' demands for the destruction of Israel, the more conviced Ahmadinejad becomes of Zionist domination. In a conversation with the editors of the German newsweekly *Der Spiegel*, the Iranian president reacted as follows to the remark that the magazine does not question Israel's right to exist: "I am glad that you are honest people and say that you are required to support the Zionists." Only when we too finally realize that the Holocaust is a Jewish lie—only when we too want to annihilate Israel—only then will Ahmadinejad be convinced that we are academically credible and politically free. It is this lunacy that makes the revolutionary mission of the Iranian leadership so dangerous.

Which brings us to the question of the broader significance of Iranian Holocaust denial. The Islamist mission is by no means restricted to Israel.

"Historical War"

In his first speech on the guiding principles of his politics, Ahmadinejad made this clear: "We are in the process of an historical war, . . . and this war has been going on for hundreds of years," he declared in October 2005. This is a war, then, that is not fundamentally about the Middle East conflict and will not end with the elimination of Israel. He continued: "We have to understand the depth of the disgrace of the enemy, until our holy hatred expands continuously and strikes like a wave." This "holy hatred" is boundless and unconditional. It will not be mitigated by any form of Jewish or non-Jewish conduct—other than subordination to *sharia* and the Koran.

In his letter to George W. Bush, the Iranian president described his objective: "Those with insight can already hear the sounds of the shattering and fall of the ideology and thoughts of the liberal democratic systems." The letter also tells how the liberal democracies will be shattered. Even here (if slightly diluted), the ideology of martyrdom—*You love life, we love death*—is propagated: "A bad ending belongs only to those who have chosen the life of this world. . . . A good land and eternal paradise belong to those servants who fear His majesty and do not follow their lascivious selves."

Shiite Islamism confronts us with an adversary who reviles the achievements of modernity as Satan's work, who denounces the international system created after 1945 as a "Jewish-Christian conspiracy," and who therefore wishes to overturn the accepted historiography of the postwar period. At the start of the Holocaust deniers' conference, Foreign Minister Mottaki explained that the problem is the "wording of historical occurrences and their analysis [are written from] the perspective of the West." As against this "Western" historiography, Islamism wants to create a new historical "truth," in which the Holocaust is declared a myth, while the Twelfth Imam is deemed real. Whereas the delusional worldview of Holocaust denial is elevated to the norm, any deviation from it is denounced as a symptom of "Jewish domination."

Even as he is conducting his religious war, Ahmadinejad is also playing the role of a global populist. He addresses his speeches to all the world's "oppressed." He cultivates good relations with Fidel Castro and Hugo Chávez and ingratiates himself with the Western left by using anti-American rhetoric. His use of the word "Zionist" is strategic. It is the Trojan horse by which he

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makes his anti-Semitism respectable, allowing him to be at once an anti-Semite and Holocaust denier and the ultimate spokesman for the "oppressed nations."

Of course, Iran would not have to rely on Holocaust denial to pursue its strategic objectives. Yet Ahmadinejad insists on the point, in order to provide ideological undergirding to his push to destroy Israel. He also speculates that this project might win the approval of the Europeans. After all, in Europe the delegitimization of Israel has been going on for some time—if for different reasons. Recently the BBC organized a symposium on the question of whether Israel would still exist in 50 years. In a poll taken four years ago in the E.U., 59 percent saw Israel as "the biggest danger to world peace." Even in the United States, a growing number of intellectuals are convinced that Israel and its American supporters are the real source of the problems facing American foreign policy.

The alarm cannot be sounded loudly enough. If Iran is not put under pressure without delay and forced to choose between changing course and suffering devastating economic sanctions, the only remaining alternatives will be a bad one—the military option—and a dreadful one—the Iranian bomb. ♦

The Full Schumer

The senator from New York and his imaginary friends

By Matthew Continetti

Carla Cohen is a co-owner of Politics and Prose, a fashionable independent bookstore in Northwest D.C. When her store brings in local or visiting authors, Cohen often serves as emcee. Her plan for this evening is straightforward. She will introduce tonight's speaker, Senator Charles "Chuck" Schumer of New York, the chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and the third-most powerful Democrat in the Senate. Then Schumer will spend 20 minutes talking about his new book, *Positively American: Winning Back the Middle-Class Majority One Family at a Time*, before spending 20 minutes taking questions from the audience, thus leaving an additional 20 minutes or so for the book signing and reception. It's a good plan; there's only one problem: Chuck Schumer has never met a time limit he didn't exceed.

It's a special occasion. A while back, Sen. Schumer called the store and asked for Carla. They had never met. I have this book coming out soon, Schumer said over the phone, and I want to talk about it at Politics and Prose. Problem was, Carla Cohen told the senator, the store was booked for February. So they settled on a new location: Washington's Sixth and I Historic Synagogue, a recently refurbished space in Chinatown with salmon-colored walls and white molding and a large dome painted sky blue—where we all are now, February 7, around 7 P.M.

Cohen is at the lectern. Schumer is sitting in the front row. Then he joins Cohen on stage. "Sen. Schumer has had a marvelous career in politics," she is saying, "and it's not over yet."

"I hope not," Sen. Schumer says.

The audience members laugh. There are about a hundred of them, concerned citizens all, some in jacket and tie but most in wool sweaters with colorful prints, corduroy pants, and winter boots. Many of the ladies are wearing purple. Many of the men are wearing gray beards. Almost everyone has glasses. Almost everyone has wrinkles. And many have copies of Schumer's book. One lady, encased in a bright green sweater and blue pants, her blond hair cut short, is underlining passages as she reads. Sometimes she draws stars in the margin for emphasis.

"In 2006," Carla Cohen goes on, "Senator Schumer was the architect of the strategy for the Democrats in the Senate. . . ."

Hearty applause.

". . . The Democratic party has to be calm and cen-

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trist." Cohen is describing Schumer's approach to the election. "Let's not talk about the social issues, let's concentrate on the issues that appeal across ethnic and regional boundaries . . . and you all know what happened."

They sure do: The Democrats went from their lowest number in the Senate since the presidency of Herbert Hoover to a tenuous, 51-member majority. But the audience wants to hear what happened from the architect himself, the man in the charcoal pinstripe suit. Schumer thanks Carla, steps out from behind the lectern, and launches into a soliloquy, his voice as nasal and reedy and *Noo-Yawk* as ever, his phrases punctuated with snorts, sighs, and chuckles, his gesticulations frequent and unwieldy.

"Now I wrote this book *Positively American*, basically I guess, I'll give you the little evolution and then I'll get into the book," Schumer says. "First, because I believed that the 2008 elections would be seminal elections, and that George Bush and the Republican party were taking America in just a *positively wrong* direction. And that 2008 was a unique opportunity because it would be an election that could well be an election like 1932 or 1980, which sort of cemented politics for a generation. In '32 Roosevelt created a Democratic majority and in '80 Ronald Reagan created a Republican majority. And basically the middle class bought into the Reagan philosophy in 1980. But now they were up for grabs—now they *are* up for grabs.

"*Why?* Because technology has changed the world. In 1980 the middle class not only felt pretty good about itself, but about its future. Today, the middle class, they don't feel they're in terrible shape, and politicians who condescend to the middle class"—here he turns his voice into a spooky, ghost-like, patronizing whine—"*Ohhh, you poor people, we'll help you* . . ."

He pauses.

". . . The average middle class family doesn't like that. But on the other hand, the world has changed, and there are new challenges, all created by technology. Technology has created terrorism: Small groups of bad people are technologically enabled to do bad things in our country and we feel less secure about it. It's created one global labor market: where for many, many jobs we compete with the labor forces all around the world, and that makes us feel a little less secure. It also means that our children compete with the children in the schools in India and China, Brazil and Nigeria, and that too creates problems. Technology has allowed us to live longer—and . . . that creates all kinds of problems.

"Thirty years of retirement? How do we make sure we have health care? How do we make sure we have adequate income? And not just that, but it changes living patterns. People get married—are less likely to get married, and if they do, later; less likely to have children, and if they do, later; and these are just three of many, many instances where technology has changed the world.

"And for the first time," Schumer says slowly, "the average person in America, the average family, is looking for a little help."

Enter Charles Ellis Schumer.

He is nothing if not an overachiever. Born in 1950 and raised in Brooklyn, Schumer was high-school valedictorian and scored 1600 on his SATs. His father, an exterminator, never went to college, but Schumer arrived at Harvard in 1967, where he soon discovered politics. This was about the time that Sen. Eugene McCarthy was leading his antiwar children's crusade for the Democratic presidential nomination, and Schumer joined in the fun. He learned how much he liked politics and hated the radical left. "They were vehemently antiestablishment," he writes in his book. "They were so sure they were morally right that they could justify taking over buildings, shouting down speakers and rejecting electoral politics."

Schumer graduated from Harvard in 1971, but remained in Cambridge a few more years, earning a J.D. from Harvard Law. The way he tells it, returning to Brooklyn in 1974, Schumer informed his parents he would decline a full time job at a prestigious Manhattan law firm. Instead he would run for an open state assembly seat in his hometown district, the Forty-Fifth. His parents were unhappy. But Schumer plugged along, and won his first campaign. He was 23 years old. He has never been anything other than a professional politician, which might be the most important fact you will ever learn about him.

In 1980 Schumer ran for Congress and won a seat in the House that he would hold for the next 18 years. An accomplished legislator, he was one of the original sponsors of the Brady gun control bill and the 1994 crime bill. In 1998, during the Monica Lewinsky scandal, he entered a three-way Democratic primary in the race to unseat Senator Pothole himself, the Republican Alfonse D'Amato. Schumer beat his Democratic rivals Geraldine Ferraro and Mark Green, and went on to defeat D'Amato, in what was, up to that point, probably the nastiest and certainly the most expensive Senate race in American history.

Schumer, unlike D'Amato, may never leave the Senate involuntarily. In 2004, he was reelected with 71 percent of the vote—a record margin for statewide office in

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New York. Schumer says 40 percent of the New Yorkers who voted for Bush that year also voted for him. The same qualities that endear him to his constituents appeal equally to fellow Senate Democrats. He has shimmied up the slippery pole that is the Senate leadership, now serving in his second term as Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee chairman and vice-chairman of the Democratic caucus. It was in this capacity that he decided to write *Positively American*.

Actually, "write" might not be the best word to describe Schumer's creative process. A young man named Daniel Squadron did the actual writing, though his name is absent from the dust jacket. "I basically wrote it myself," Schumer told *Publishers Weekly Daily* in a recent interview, "in the sense that all the ideas were mine. I more or less dictated it, and then Daniel wrote it, put it in smoother language." Schumer is also quick to point out that his book is not exactly "nonfiction," in the sense of being strictly factual. "I don't carry a tape recorder everywhere I go," he writes in the introduction. "Nor do I keep a diary. I never have. In putting the book together, I relied heavily on my memory and, in isolated instances, took slight literary license to more fully describe a story."

The reader—at least this one—doesn't really mind such liberties. Instead one is bowled over by the force of Schumer's personality. He shares his weaknesses: "Having nothing to do brings out the worst in me"; "I'm just cheap." He describes what he was eating at any particular moment: beef on weck, "Brooklyn's own" White Eagle Sausage, Flutie Flakes, chicken wings, corn flakes, fried wonton noodles with duck sauce, almond cookies, hot and sour soup, cold sesame noodles, spicy Szechuan shrimp, string beans in black bean sauce, grilled octopus, Frosted Mini-Wheats, oysters, roasted corn—feel free to go get a snack—cheesecake and tiramasu, apple pie, pizza, sushi, empanadas, a "crispy Nathan's hot dog with a generous slathering of mustard," popcorn, and his wife Iris's sweet potato pie. He provides movie and vacation-spot recommendations: Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* ("If you haven't seen it, you really should") and Monument Valley ("You should be sure to visit"). And he talks . . . well, let him tell it.

"The book is divided into two parts," Schumer is saying to the crowd at the Sixth and I Historic Synagogue. He is pacing back and forth on the stage. Sometimes he leans against the lectern. He has been talking for at least 35 minutes. Carla Cohen is looking anxious. Her plans have been upset. "The first part traces the political history of a family, and my political history," Schumer says. "The family is fictional. I call them Joe and Eileen Bailey. They are fictional in the book, but they are *real* to me. I have known them for 15 or 20 years. I talk to them, all my ideas I bounce off them; in fact, one of my press secretaries once got me in a little trouble because he told the press I had imaginary friends. But basically, whatever success I've had in my political career is because I talk to the Baileys. And I try to do things that matter to them. I wrote a law that made part of tuition tax-deductible 'cause I know the Baileys have trouble paying tuition. I wrote a law that made generic drugs available, because I know the Baileys have trouble paying for the high cost of drugs.

"And when I don't agree with them—I wouldn't agree with them, say, on affirmative action or the gay marriage amendment—I tell *them* why. I don't tell the *New York Times* editorial board—even though I get great support from them. I talk to the Baileys. And the first part of the book—let me tell you a little bit about the Baileys, so you get an understanding. He's an insurance adjuster, he makes about $50,000 a year. She works in a medical office in the neighborhood, she makes about $20,000. So, in New York they make $70,000 and in Mississippi they might make $50,000, but they're the same people. They are—they have three kids. They live in Massapequa, which is a suburb on Long Island, a middle class suburb, and . . . they're very good people. I like them. I admire them. I grew up with them. They're the salt of the earth."

They must also be in the Federal Witness Protection Program, because when Schumer first started talking about the Baileys last summer, they were named the O'Reillys. The slip is revealing, in its own way. Like their name, the very idea of the Baileys is elastic; Schumer's imaginary friends are able to fit any location, ethnicity, or social circumstance. In his book Schumer writes that the Baileys are also "the Hancocks of Cazenovia, the Thompsons of Laurelton, the Ramirezes of Port Chester, the Pachinskis of Cheektowaga or the Shapiros of Riverdale . . ." In other words, the Baileys are everybody—which is to say, nobody. Nonetheless, Schumer constantly wonders what all of these nobodies are thinking. And whadda ya know? With a few exceptions, they think exactly like he does!

One is tempted to conclude that, in its own fashion, Schumer's book serves as a metaphor for our federal government: After all, in it he finds ways to spend real money—yours—to satisfy the imaginary needs of people who do not actually exist. But that would do a disservice to Schumer's larger project, which is real and, if he would just stop talking long enough for people to realize it, important. The Democratic party, in Schumer's analysis, is paralyzed by the special interests that compose it. This paralysis extends from electoral politics—where feminist, labor, and racial grievance groups apply litmus tests that filter out heterodox candidates—to

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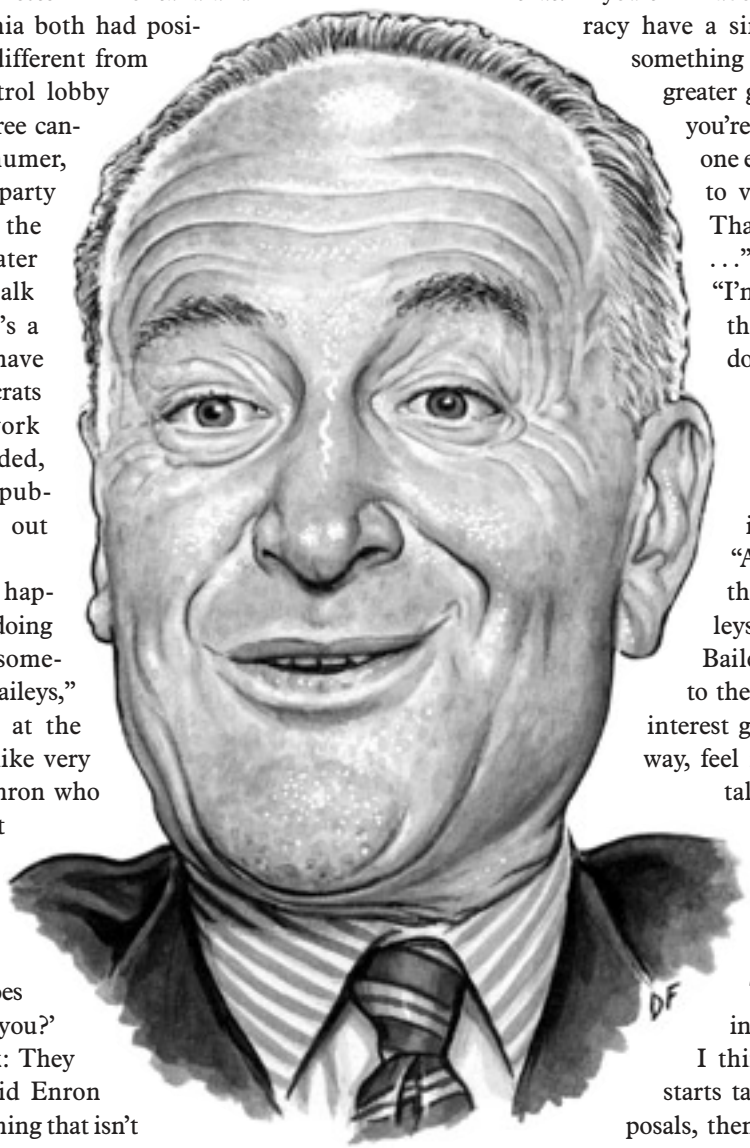
governance, where those same groups, and petty regional constituencies, inhibit legislators from crafting laws for the common good.

This is the sort of stuff that gets the Baileys upset. So, as Schumer recruited candidates to run for the Senate in 2006, he was unafraid to take on the major interest groups. He supported the pro-life Bob Casey Jr. over the objections of NARAL. Jon Tester in Montana and James Webb in Virginia both had positions on guns vastly different from those of the gun control lobby (and Schumer). All three candidates won. For Schumer, the lesson is that the party should stretch out to the center rather than cater to the activists who talk only to each other. It's a lesson that seems to have worked for the Democrats in 2006, and may work in the future—provided, of course, that the public doesn't tune them out altogether.

Which can easily happen when Schumer is doing the talking. "Here's something else about the Baileys," he tells the audience at the synagogue. "They dislike very much the people at Enron who stole all that money. But they hate the people who burn the flag even more. Most liberals don't understand that. They say, 'Why does burning the flag hurt you?' Here's what they think: They say the people who did Enron were in excess of something that isn't bad—which is working hard, making a lot of money, building up a company. They just crossed the line—they don't like them, they should be punished, they're hurting me.

"But the people who are burning the flag are telling the Baileys *I dislike you and everything you stand for*. Because the Baileys identify with America. And they identify with all the things America stands for. And they can't understand why someone would take the freedom that we have in America to step on America.



Chuck Schumer

Illustration by Drew Friedman

"One other thing about the Baileys, this more fundamental than the other two—but we have like a 10-page description of them which I think you'll enjoy reading. . . ."

A Schumer aide holds up five fingers, signaling to her boss that it's time to wrap up.

". . . They believe in their gut in both capitalism and democracy," Schumer goes on. "And what do I mean by that? If you think about it, capitalism and democracy have a similar credo: which is, do something to benefit yourself, and the greater good prevails. Democracy—you're not supposed to vote someone else's interest, your supposed to vote your own self-interest. That's how democracy started. . . ." He looks at Carla Cohen. "I'm going to take a little more than the 20 minutes if you don't mind."

Carla is silent. The aide slumps in her seat and checks her BlackBerry.

Schumer has been talking for almost the full hour. "And . . . um . . . I even told the candidates who the Baileys were, and I said pick the Baileys of your state and talk to them. Don't talk to the special interest groups—the Baileys, by the way, feel most of government never talks to them. And they're right. They're tired of people talking to special interest groups, to lobbyists, to the media, to one another—*talk to me!* That's what I've tried to do in my political career, at least, I think, more than many." He starts talking about his policy proposals, then turns once more to Carla. "Let's see how long I'm going."

"Long," Carla says, shaking her head.

"Long. Okay, Miss Candor. I just called her Miss Candor. Carla Cohen says I'm going too long. First goal: raising math and reading scores by 50 percent. . . ."

Audience members with copies of *Positively American* on their laps flip to the table of contents. They study the pages before them. A look of horror spreads across their faces. Because this is only the beginning. The senator has ten more goals to go. ♦

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Scenes from the Climate Inquisition

The chilling effect of the global warming consensus

By Steven F. Hayward and Kenneth P. Green

On February 2, an AEI research project on climate change policy that we have been organizing was the target of a journalistic hit piece in Britain's largest left-wing newspaper, the *Guardian*. The article's allegation—that we tried to bribe scientists to criticize the work of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)—is easy to refute. More troubling is the growing worldwide effort to silence anyone with doubts about the catastrophic warming scenario that Al Gore and other climate extremists are putting forth.

"Scientists and economists have been offered $10,000 each by a lobby group funded by one of the world's largest oil companies to undermine a major climate change report due to be published today," read the *Guardian*'s lead. The byline was Ian Sample, the paper's science correspondent, and his story ran under the headline "Scientists Offered Cash to Dispute Climate Study."

Sample spoke to one of us for five minutes to gather a perfunctory quotation to round out his copy, but he clearly was not interested in learning the full story. He found time, however, to canvass critics for colorful denunciations of the American Enterprise Institute as "the Bush administration's intellectual Cosa Nostra," with nothing but "a suitcase full of cash."

Every claim in the story was false or grossly distorted, starting with the description of the American Enterprise Institute as a "lobby group"—AEI engages in no lobbying—funded by the world's largest oil company. The *Guardian* reports that "AEI has received more than $1.6 million from ExxonMobil." Yes—over the last seven years, a sum that represents less than 1 percent of AEI's total revenue during that period.

The irony of this story line is that AEI and similar right-leaning groups are more often attacked for supposedly ignoring the scientific "consensus" and promoting only the views of a handful of "skeptics" from the disreputable fringe. Yet in this instance, when we sought the views of leading "mainstream" scientists, our project is said to be an attempt at bribery. In any event, it has never been true that we ignore mainstream science; and anyone who reads AEI publications closely can see that we are not "skeptics" about warming. It is possible to accept the general consensus about the existence of global warming while having valid questions about the extent of warming, the consequences of warming, and the appropriate responses. In particular, one can remain a *policy* skeptic, which is where we are today, along with nearly all economists.

The substantive backstory, in brief, is as follows. The 2001 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change expressed the hope that scientific progress would reduce key uncertainties in climate models, especially having to do with clouds and aerosols. As the 2001 report stated: "The accuracy of these [temperature] estimates continues to be limited by uncertainties in estimates of internal variability, natural and anthropogenic forcing, and the climate response to external forcing." The IPCC identified 12 key factors for climate modeling, and said that the level of scientific understanding was "very low" for 7 of the 12. What progress have climate models made since this assessment was written, we wondered? Even people who closely follow the scientific journals are hard-pressed to tell.

Last summer we decided to commission essays from

Steven F. Hayward is the F.K. Weyerhaeuser fellow at the American Enterprise Institute. Kenneth P. Green is a resident scholar at AEI. Both are frequent contributors to AEI's Environmental Policy Outlook.

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Zuma / Corbis / Peter Csolino

Al Gore at Yale, speaking about the "climate emergency," with his slide show in the background

scientists, economists, and public policy experts in the hope of launching a fresh round of discussion and perhaps holding a conference or publishing a book. Among the nine scholars we wrote to in July were Gerald North and Steve Schroeder of Texas A&M, who have done scrupulous and detailed work on some key aspects of climate modeling, and we were confident that their work would be seen as authoritative by all sides. (North chaired the recent National Academy of Sciences review of the controversial "hockey stick" temperature reconstruction.) We couched our query in the context of wanting to make sure the next IPCC report received serious scrutiny and criticism.

Our offer of an honorarium of up to $10,000 to busy scientists to review several thousand pages of material and write an original analysis in the range of 7,500 to 10,000 words is entirely in line with honoraria AEI and similar organizations pay to distinguished economists and legal scholars for commissioned work. (Our letter to North and Schroeder can be found readily on AEI's website.)

North declined our invitation on account of an already full schedule. Schroeder shared our letter with one of his Texas A&M colleagues, atmospheric scientist Andrew Dessler. Dessler posted our complete letter on his blog in late July, along with some critical but largely fair-minded comments, including: "While one might be skeptical that the AEI will give the [IPCC Fourth Assessment Report] a fair hearing, the fact that they have solicited input from a credible and mainstream scientist like Jerry North sug-

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gests to me that I should not prejudge their effort."

Dessler's story was linked on another popular environmental blog (*www.grist.org*), after which someone in the environmental advocacy community (the *Washington Post* suggests it was Greenpeace and the Public Interest Research Group) picked up the story and tried to plant it, with a sinister spin, somewhere in the media. Several reporters looked into it—including one from a major broadcast network who spent half a day talking with us in November about the substance of our climate views—but reached the conclusion that there was no story here. In particular, AEI's recent book *Strategic Options for Bush Administration Climate Policy,* advocating a carbon tax and criticizing Bush administration climate policy, clearly didn't fit the "Big Oil lobby corrupts science" story line.

So instead, the story was taken overseas and peddled to the *Guardian*, which, like some of its British competitors, has a history of publishing environmentalist hype as news. (In December, *Guardian* columnist George Monbiot offered the view that "every time someone dies as a result of floods in Bangladesh, an airline executive should be dragged out of his office and drowned.") Add a Matt Drudge link and a credulous recycling of the story by NPR's "Morning Edition," and a full-scale media frenzy was on. Even Al Gore jumped on the bandwagon, calling us "unethical" in an appearance in Silicon Valley and a CNN interview.

We were deluged with calls, but—unlike the reporters who had looked at the story last fall—none of our interrogators last week evinced any interest in the substance of our views on climate change science or policy, nor did any news story that we have seen accurately report the figures we supplied regarding ExxonMobil's share of AEI's funding.

The rollout of the IPCC report and the Guardian *story attacking us coincide with the climax of what can be aptly described as a climate inquisition intended to stifle debate.*

The *Guardian* story, it should be noted, appeared the very day the IPCC released its new summary on the science of climate change. This was a transparent attempt to discredit an anticipated AEI blast at the IPCC. But no such blast was ever in the offing. As our letter to Schroeder makes clear, our project was not expected to produce any published results until some time in 2008, long after the headlines about the IPCC report would have faded.

Meanwhile, the IPCC's release of a 21-page summary of its work a full three months before the complete 1,400-page report is due to be published is exactly the kind of maneuver that raises questions about the politicization of the IPCC process. Why the delay? In the past, official summaries of IPCC reports have sometimes overstated the consensus of scientific opinion revealed later in the fine print (though, to be fair, it is more often the media and advocacy groups that misrepresent findings or omit the IPCC's caveats and declarations of uncertainty on key points). Is the full report going to be rewritten to square more closely with the summary? The Scientific Alliance in Cambridge, England, noted that it is "an unusual step to publish the summary of a document that has not yet been finalized and released into the public domain."

One possible reason for the timing is that there appear to be some significant retreats from the 2001 IPCC report. The IPCC has actually lowered its estimate of the magnitude of human influence on warming, though we shall have to wait for the full report in May to understand how and why. Only readers with detailed knowledge of the 2001 report would notice these changes, which is why most news accounts failed to report them.

This reining-in has led some climate pessimists to express disappointment with the new summary. Environmental writer Joseph Romm, for example, complained about "the conservative edge to the final product." Which returns us to our starting point.

The rollout of the IPCC report and the *Guardian* story attacking us coincide with the climax of what can be aptly described as a climate inquisition intended to stifle debate about climate science and policy. Anyone who does not sign up 100 percent behind the catastrophic scenario is deemed a "climate change denier." Distinguished climatologist Ellen Goodman spelled out the implication in her widely syndicated newspaper column last week: "Let's just say that global warming deniers are now on a par with Holocaust deniers." One environmental writer suggested last fall that there should someday be Nuremberg Trials—or at the very least a South African-style Truth and Reconciliation Commission—for climate skeptics who have blocked the planet's salvation.

Former Vice President Al Gore has proposed that the media stop covering climate skeptics, and Britain's environment minister said that, just as the media should give no platform to terrorists, so they should exclude cli-

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mate change skeptics from the airwaves and the news pages. Heidi Cullen, star of the Weather Channel, made headlines with a recent call for weather-broadcasters with impure climate opinions to be "decertified" by the American Meteorological Society. Just this week politicians in Oregon and Delaware stepped up calls for the dismissal of their state's official climatologists, George Taylor and David Legates, solely on the grounds of their public dissent from climate orthodoxy. And as we were completing this article, a letter arrived from senators Bernard Sanders, Pat Leahy, Dianne Feinstein, and John Kerry expressing "very serious concerns" about our alleged "attempt to undermine science." Show-trial hearing to follow? Stay tuned.

Desperation is the chief cause for this campaign of intimidation. The Kyoto accords are failing to curtail greenhouse gas emissions in a serious way, and although it is convenient to blame Bush, anyone who follows the Kyoto evasions of the Europeans knows better. The Chinese will soon eclipse the United States as world's largest greenhouse gas emitter, depriving the gas-rationers of one of their favorite sticks for beating up Americans. The economics of steep, near-term emissions cuts are forbidding—though that's one consensus the climate crusaders ignore. Robert Samuelson nailed it in his syndicated column last week: "Don't be fooled. The dirty secret about global warming is this: We have no solution."

The demonization of anyone who does not parrot the Gore version of the issue—manmade climate catastrophe necessitating draconian cuts in emissions—has been relentless.

The relentless demonization of anyone who does not fall in behind the Gore version of the issue—manmade climate catastrophe necessitating draconian cuts in emissions—has been effective. Steve Schroeder practically admitted as much when he told the *Washington Post* that, although he didn't think AEI would distort his work, he feared it could be "misused" or placed alongside "off-the-wall ideas" questioning the existence of global warming. In other words, Schroeder was afraid of the company he might have to keep. For the record, AEI extended an invitation to participate in this project to only one so-called skeptic (who declined, on grounds that reviewing the next IPCC report isn't worth the effort). The other scientists and economists we contacted are from the "mainstream," and we were happy to share with them the names of other prospective participants if they asked. Over the last four years, AEI has repeatedly invited senior IPCC figures, including Susan Solomon, Robert Watson, Richard Moss, and Nebojsa Nakicenovic, to speak at AEI panels and seminars, always with an offer to pay honoraria. Full schedules prevented these four from accepting our invitation; a few more junior IPCC members have spoken at AEI.

But the climate inquisition may prompt a backlash. One straw in the wind was the bracing statement made by Mike Hulme, director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research and one of Britain's leading climate scientists. "I have found myself increasingly chastised by climate change campaigners when my public statements and lectures on climate change have not satisfied their thirst for environmental drama and exaggerated rhetoric," Hulme told the BBC in November. "It seems that it is we, the professional climate scientists, who are now the skeptics. How the wheel turns. . . . Why is it not just campaigners, but politicians and scientists, too, who are openly confusing the language of fear, terror, and disaster with the observable physical reality of climate change, actively ignoring the careful hedging which surrounds science's predictions? . . . To state that climate change will be 'catastrophic' hides a cascade of value-laden assumptions which do not emerge from empirical or theoretical science."

Then in December, Kevin Vranes of the University of Colorado, by no means a climate skeptic, commented on a widely read science blog about the mood of the most recent meeting of the American Geophysical Union, where Al Gore had made his standard climate presentation. "To sum up the state of the [climate science] world in one word, as I see it right now, it is this: *tension*," Vranes wrote. "What I am starting to hear is *internal backlash*. . . . None of this is to say that the *risk* of climate change is being questioned or downplayed by our community; it's not. It is to say that I think some people feel that we've created a monster by limiting the ability of people in our community to question results that say '*climate change is right here!*'"

The climate inquisition is eliminating any space for sensible criticism of the climate science process or moderate deliberation about policy. Greenpeace and its friends may be celebrating their ability to gin up a phony scandal story and feed it to the left-wing press, but if people who are serious about climate change hunker down in their fortifications and stay silent, that bodes ill for the future of climate policy and science generally. ♦

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The Rise of the Metro Republicans

How McCain, Romney, and Giuliani may redraw the red-blue map

By Noemie Emery

Here are the three leading candidates for president in the Republican party, a party based in the South and in the interior, rural in nature, and backed in large part by social conservatives: the senior senator from Arizona, a congenital maverick with friends in the press and a habit of dissing the base of his party; the former governor of deep-blue Massachusetts, son of a Michigan governor, a Mormon who looks, sounds, and comes across as a city boy; and the former mayor of New York, the Big Apple itself, ethnic and Catholic, pro-choice and pro-gun control, married three times, and a man who—Neil Simon, where are you?—moved in with a gay friend and his partner when he was thrown out of Gracie Mansion by his estranged and enraged second wife.

None hails from the South, none looks or sounds country, none is conspicuous for traditional piety, and none is linked closely to social conservatives. At the same time, none is exactly at odds with social conservatives either. None is a moderate, in the sense of being a centrist on anything or wary of conservatives; rather, each is a strong conservative on many key issues, while having a dissident streak on a few. Each has a way of presenting conservative views that centrists don't find threatening, and projecting fairly traditional values in a language that secular voters don't fear. In a country that has been ferociously split into two near-equal camps of voters for at least the past decade, this is no small accomplishment, as it suggests the potential to cross cultural barriers, and therefore extend one's own reach. If one of these men wins, it may mark a return to broader, national parties. And the iconic map of the recent elections, with the blue states draped like a shawl over the broad, red shoulders of Middle America, may give way to more subtle designs.

For those too young to remember it clearly, things were not always like this. In 1976, eight years after Richard M. Nixon invented his "southern strategy," Democrat Jimmy Carter carried all of the South below Virginia, running as the social conservative against Gerald Ford, who backed both the ERA and abortion and carried California, Connecticut, Maine, and New Jersey, now all a deep shade of blue. On this side of the two Reagan landslides, when the Gipper pocketed everything not nailed to the floorboards, George Bush the elder took Ford's bi-coastal four, adding to them the currently deeply blue precincts of Delaware, Maryland, Illinois, Pennsylvania, and Vermont. Four years later, all nine states had flipped back to the Democrats, in what seemed more a generational than a cultural or partisan passage: Bill Clinton, a boy from the Ozarks who had gone to Yale, Oxford, and Georgetown, and Bush, a Connecticut blue blood transplanted to Texas, were cross-cultural figures who could span diverse worlds.

It was between 1993 and 1995, however, that things fell apart. The Man from Hope went blue state and bi-coastal, making new friends among rock stars and film stars, drifting far left on abortion and quotas, and, in a moment that would come to seem all too symbolic, halting air traffic on the LAX runway while his tresses were coiffed by hairdresser-to-the-stars Christophe. Retribution came in the 1994 midterms, which liberals saw as "the lynching," or as "the Anschluss," or as The End of the World as It Was. Liberals on the Upper West Side compared it to Kristallnacht, and said that they feared for their lives and their country. Far worse lay ahead for them. When the Toxic Texan George W. Bush won reelection in 2004, James Atlas wrote this depiction of the "Blue State of Mind" in *New York* magazine: "Do you mean there's still going to be civilization? Classical music, summaries of the week's *New York Times Book Review*, murmurous programs on the 'Treasures of Ancient China' exhibit at the Met?"

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Republican governors continued to win in big states like Michigan, Wisconsin, New York, and New Jersey, with a lot of bipartisan, crossover backing; but attention was fixed on the leaders of Congress, who all seemed to come from the sticks, with hair that looked to be cut not by Christophe but by Ma Kettle with a bowl in the parlor. Against this backdrop, it was no surprise that in the 1996 election—when a now deep-blue Bill Clinton faced laconic Bob Dole from the red state of Kansas—the outlines of the red and blue map of the 2000 election began to take shape. Clinton lost all the deep South, with the exception of Florida, while cleaning up in California and in the Northeast. The regional divide was intensified by the drama of Clinton's impeachment, which pitted the people appalled or embarrassed by Clinton's behavior against those titillated by it, or at least those who believed lying less sinful than being conservative. Forgetting conveniently that it was feminist Democrats who had perfected the art of pillorying conservative men on impropriety charges, Clinton's defenders ended by apologizing to Europe for the provincial mores of their embarrassing countrymen. The days of 1992, when Clinton still had an appeal to people named Bubba, and the elder George Bush had to be told to pretend to like pork rinds, now seemed like very old history. Then came the 2000 election, and George W. Bush and Al Gore.

On paper, both Gore and Bush seemed deceptively purple—one the son of a dirt-poor Tennessee senator, who had been raised in both Carthage and Washington; one the son of Connecticut Yankees, who had been taken to Texas at age two. But the two clans had then gone in different directions; the Gores embracing and melting into the eastern establishment, against which the younger George Bush rebelled. Republican governors—a diverse crew who had been highly successful in northern-tier venues—pushed the younger Bush forward as one of the best of their number, a reformer who had worked well with the Democrats in his state, and might have cross-cultural appeal. But to the blue states, he appeared a foreign and threatening figure, whose past life in professional sports and big oil won no respect and no allies, and whose references to God and redemption—religion had helped him overcome a drinking problem—aroused their contempt and their fear. The contrast was deepened in 2004, when Bush faced a genuine northeastern liberal, a billionaire by marriage who lived very well on his second wife's money, who skied in Sun Valley, lounged in a chateau brought over from England, and who, while Bush chopped brush in the rank heat of Crawford, Texas, windsurfed off Nantucket in brightly patterned shorts.

In the event, the results of the 2004 election were exactly the same as those of 2000, with a few small corrections that made the voting blocs still more monolithic: New Hampshire flipped to the Democrats, making the northern tier a long swath of azure; New Mexico and Iowa went to the Republicans, making the vast stretch of the heartland an unbroken sea of red. In fact, the real divide was less North vs. South or coastal vs. interior than urban vs. rural, the blue states often made so by their huge urban centers.

"There were stark differences between the largest metropolitan areas . . . and the rest of the country," Michael Barone noted after the 2000 election. Republicans suffered serious losses in the major metro areas but only small losses outside them. Most of the gains made by Clinton-Gore Democrats, he noted, could be accounted for by seven cities: New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Detroit, and Washington. These metropolitan areas "were evenly split between Republicans and Democrats in the 1988 election, but gave Al Gore a 23 percent margin in 2000." Since the culture wars of the early 1990s, they have put a high floor underneath each political party, but also imposed a fairly low ceiling not too far above it that neither has been able to break through.

In both 1992 and '96, Clinton won by impressive electoral margins, but could not win 50 percent of the popular vote when running against two center-right rivals. George W. Bush lost the popular vote in 2000 in what was essentially a statistical tie, and his 50.7 percent of the popular vote in 2004 was the highest since his father's triumph over Michael Dukakis, 16 years earlier. Clearly, a Metro Republican (or his counterpart, a Traditional Democrat), who could carry his party's core message while not viscerally antagonizing the other half of the country, would have the best chance of breaking the deadlock, and putting the rest of the map into play.

And, thanks to some flameouts in the 2006 midterms, Metro Republicans are what the party now has. McCain is the only one of the three who comes from the West, but he tends to play well with a northern audience. Running against Bush in the 2000 cycle, he won independents (his problem was with Republicans), and won primaries in New Hampshire and Michigan, where crossover votes were allowed. Urbane and urban, Romney comes from Massachusetts by way of Michigan, won as a Republican in what is perhaps the most liberal state in the Union, and has quartered his campaign in the North End of Boston, as far from the Sunbelt as is humanly possible. And no one screams New York quite as loudly as does Giuliani, who would be the most urban candidate,

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should he win the nomination, since Alfred E. Smith.

Giuliani would be only the fourth Roman Catholic to run for president on a major national ticket (Smith, John Kennedy, and John Kerry being the others), the third ethnic (if you count the Irish as ethnics), and only the second major candidate for president (after Dukakis) whose forebears did not come from northern Europe and did not have English as their native tongue. He is not from Dr. Howard Dean's neighborhood (Park Avenue), or from the New York of the Roosevelt cousins (whose main homes were their much-loved estates in the country). He is a New Yorker from Brooklyn, of Ellis Island as opposed to Mayflower provenance. So far the country's one "ethnic" president has been Irish, and he had been so thoroughly Anglicized by the time he was 20 that he was entirely plausible as the in-law and friend of the Devonshire family that he in reality became when his sister married the duke's elder son. Giuliani would be an energetic fiscal and law-and-order conservative running on a demographic profile that tends to strongly connect to FDR Democrats, a thing not before seen on the national level.

McCain, Romney, and Giuliani aren't quite your "normal" conservative candidates, which is both their strength and an opportunity for their party. Each could be seen as running either to the right or the left of the other two, depending on what issues are most salient. On defense, McCain is the über-hawk, and on spending, he is well to the right of the president. Then, there are the other issues, like immigration and campaign finance reform, about which the less said the better, from the point of view of the conservative base. Romney lacks the war-on-terror credentials of McCain and the mayor, but he is a fiscal conservative (who refused to raise taxes in the state of Taxachusetts), to the right of McCain and Giuliani on immigration and campaign finance reform, way to the right of Giuliani on most social issues, and on some to the right of McCain. He backs the federal amendment to outlaw gay marriage, and has fought the use of embryos for stem cell research, leading *National Review*'s John J. Miller to observe that he has "done his best to defend the culture of life on . . . the most inhospitable terrain in the country."

The pitfall for Romney is being perceived as Slick Mitt. In 1994, when running for the Senate against Edward M. Kennedy, he made this Clintonesque statement: "I believe that abortion should be safe and legal. . . . I believe that since *Roe* v. *Wade* has been the law for 20 years, that we should sustain and support it, and I sustain and support that law, and the right of a woman to make that choice." Running for governor in 2002, he defined himself personally as no longer pro-choice, but said in a survey, "Women should be free to choose based on their own beliefs, not mine."

Against this background, McCain's record stands out as a model of clarity, but he has his problems with music, not words. He is the only one of the three to have been pro-life consistently, but he is also the one who in the 2000 campaign made a seemingly gratuitous attack on the religious right and its leaders, calling them "forces of evil," though he has since made his peace. Would-be supporters complain he is "tone-deaf," at least when it comes to their feelings. He jokes that the mainstream media are his base. He has recently stopped twisting his thumbs in the eyes of people who might otherwise back him, but some still resent what they see as his attitude. The Mormon and Maverick are both an odd lot when it comes to the way the base views them. And that's where the Mayor comes in.

Giuliani is not only pro-choice, but also anti-gun and gay-friendly, an urban cowboy who marches in gay rights parades (just like a Democrat), and appears in drag at a correspondents' assembly, though looking less like the plausible Dustin Hoffman in *Tootsie* than like Tony Curtis in *Some Like It Hot*. This should count him out in the South, and with social conservatives—but so far, at least, it has not. How come? Because they admire him despite his stance on those litmus-test issues. Indeed, they see him in some key respects as a fellow social conservative who brought law and order to a city in crisis, the head-banging crime fighter who bonded with cops, flushed the porn shops out of Times Square, and protested loudly when a dung-draped Madonna was shown at the expense of the public at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. He has endeared himself to conservatives everywhere by taking on, and often defeating, the *New York Times* and the American Civil Liberties Union. He is the enemy and the antithesis of the therapy culture that is at the core of the modern liberal project, the foe of relativism and friend of retribution and punishment, when it is called for. The word *evildoers* would not seem strange on his lips.

Giuliani's accomplishment in hosing down a sink of a city that some people think could have passed for Gomorrah has allowed him to bond with the base of his party as no other figure has done. And no one else emerged from the events of September 11 in quite the same way, as both a wartime leader and in some ennobling way as a survivor of the attacks, too. "Giuliani can't do southern preacher," wrote Hanna Rosin, the former religion writer for the *Washington Post*, "yet there's a current of spirituality running through his speech on the subject of 9/11, and how that day shattered and changed him [as] he stood watching debris fall from the Twin Towers, and realized that it was, in fact, people jumping. He was lost, without a plan. . . . Yet somehow he found sources of inspiration and strength. He remembered what he'd always known: 'the value of teamwork,' the

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need to 'be there when the going gets tough.' . . . Giuliani does not mention God, except once, in a joke. But his speech is infused with the kind of uplifting message that these days shares boundaries with preaching. 'You've got to care about people. . . . You've got to love them,' he says." What he has done is to give a religious speech that appeals to his base without alarming a larger audience. In the end, few seem to be thinking of guns, or abortion, or gays.

Professional analysts, both liberal and conservative, keep insisting that Giuliani will never survive the Republican primaries. Non-professionals sense something different. In December 2004, blogger Hugh Hewitt, who speaks frequently to groups of conservative activists, began taking informal polls of his audiences, and found Giuliani sweeping three-fourths of the field. At *Real Clear Politics*, Tom Bevan began polling his readers, with similar results. "I consider myself a 'religious right' person, and am nonetheless enthused about Rudy," read a typical email, and others hit notes that were similar: "I disagree with Giuliani on some issues, but I can live with honest disagreements, having tremendous respect for his character and judgment."

What's causing this temperance on the right-to-life watch? A combination of things. There's the undoubted urgency of the war and peace issue; the fact that a pro-choice Republican elected by the votes of pro-lifers and indebted to them would act differently than a pro-choice Democrat elected with the help of the abortion-rights lobbies; and the understanding that Rudy is in no way personally hostile to social conservatives. As John Podhoretz noted in the *New York Post*, "past 'liberal' GOP candidates and would-be candidates have sought the nomination by taking strong stands counter to the views of the party's conservative base." Unlike Rudy, "those candidates . . . were engaging in battle against the social conservatives. They were fighting a culture war within the GOP." As a law-and-order conservative, Giuliani would be unlikely to name liberals to the bench, and he has written that Samuel Alito and Chief Justice John Roberts are the kind of justices he would appoint to the Supreme Court. Will that be enough to quell the fears of some social conservatives that a Giuliani-led Republican party would be a betrayal of the issues they hold dear?

Certainly, a long string of polls taken from early in 2006 to the present seem to suggest he could thread

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the needle. Consistently, they show Metro Republicans beating the purer red models (among Republicans, and among social conservatives) and beating Democrats in all of the head-to-head heats. The consistency has been remarkable. In December 2005, Giuliani and McCain led all other Republicans in a CNN/*USA Today*/Gallup national poll. In January 2006, Giuliani beat McCain 28-22 in a poll among Georgia Republicans. In November 2006, an Opinion Research Corporation/CNN poll found Giuliani leading McCain 33-30; a Rasmussen poll found Giuliani leading McCain (and Condi Rice) 24-17-18; and a Quinnipiac University poll of 1,623 registered voters on November 27 gave Giuliani a favorability rating of 64.2 to 49 for Hillary Clinton, 58.8 for Barack Obama, and 57.7 for John McCain.

Among self-identified Republicans, Giuliani scored 71.7, ahead of both McCain and Newt Gingrich; among White Evangelicals/Born-again Christians, he scored 66.3, 8 points better than George W. Bush. A Survey USA poll taken last summer positing head-to-head contests in all 50 states between all leading contenders showed McCain and Giuliani beating Hillary Clinton in electoral landslides, 351 to 187 and 354 to 184, both holding almost all the red Bush states, flipping the blue states of Pennsylvania and Michigan, and breaking up the Democratic entrenchments in New England and in the Far West. Both "won" in Oregon, Connecticut, Maine, and Rhode Island; McCain, the reformer from the open spaces of Arizona, won the Birkenstock states of Washington, Minnesota, Vermont, and Wisconsin. Giuliani shook loose New Jersey (which was hit very hard on 9/11), and held on to Florida, which flipped to Hillary against John McCain. In a CBS News poll released early this year, the Metro Republicans (McCain and Giuliani) beat the conventional Democrats (John Edwards, Al Gore, Hillary Clinton) by double digits among independents, and have much lower unfavorable ratings among those in the opposite party. Polls taken almost two years out are of course not to be taken to the bank. But among people who have been celebrities for at least the last decade, and have had their flaws, strengths, and scandals exhaustively publicized, they cannot be dismissed either, and suggest consistently that candidates with a cultural pull beyond and outside of the base of their parties have a distinct, undeniable edge.

So there they all are—a hawkish war hero who holds Goldwater's seat but who charms independents; a Mormon from Michigan who will run his campaign from North Boston; and a pro-choice New Yorker who thrills southern social conservatives—all trying to be Reagan's heir. And let us recall that Reagan himself was a complex enough figure: a man who was divorced and remarried (as are McCain and Giuliani), a former film star and a recovering Democrat, from Illinois by way of Hollywood, who signed a liberal abortion bill while governor of California, was comfortable with gays in his filmmaking milieu, and once even backed the New Deal.

Compared with this, the curriculum vitae of Barry Goldwater was a model of consistency, purity, and orthodoxy, one of the reasons Reagan won 44 and 49 states in his runs for president, while Goldwater won only six. "Prisoner of Conscience" runs the headline of a John McCain profile in a recent *Vanity Fair*, in which the ex-POW undergoes tortures at the hands of his base that make his five years in the Hanoi Hilton look like a month in the country, or at least like a week at Club Med. "Did I fix it?" he is quoted as having said to an aide, leaving a forum in which he stumbled over his lines on gay marriage. The answer, it seemed, was no. "John McCain has spent his whole day, this whole year, these whole last six years, trying to 'fix it,'" the story continues, "trying to make the maverick, freethinking impulses that first made him into a political star somehow compatible with the suck-it-up adherence to the orthodoxies" beloved of his supposedly close-minded base.

But the point of the piece—that the conservative base is a nest of southern-fried tyrants with no sense of nuance—falls apart when one knows that much of this base is now ga-ga for Rudy, who, so far at least, has not tried to "fix" anything, and that part of it now is looking hard at Mitt Romney, who 12 years ago defined himself as pro-choice. By contrast, there are at this time in the top tier of the opposite party no pro-life Democrats, no Democratic candidates from Alabama or Texas, and few with cross-party appeal. In the 2006 midterms, the Democrats made a conscious and conspicuous effort to cross-pollinate, and did rope in a few what could be called reverse Rudys, the rustic and buzz-cut Jon Tester of Montana, the excitable James Webb from Virginia, and Bob Casey Jr., son of the late governor of Pennsylvania who was humiliated by his party at their 1992 convention for his pro-life views. They are green and untested, and may not blend well with their feminized party; but if they survive, things could get interesting. Almost as interesting as the fact that our first urban, Italian, thrice-married president may come to us through the modern Republican party, which, as everyone knows, is rural, racist, Dixiecrat, redneck, uptight, and wholly intolerant of personal slippage. Nothing stands still for long, not even our parties. And what would the map look like then? ♦

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Getty / Robert Mecea

Mike Wallace, Robert Brustein, and Carol Channing at the Theatre Hall of Fame, 2002

Theatrical Man

On and off the boards with Robert Brustein BY JOHN SIMON

Reading Robert Brustein's latest collection of theater reviews, I had two surprises. First, about how much we disagreed (seven or eight times out of ten), and second, about how little that prevented my reading enjoyment.

Brustein is not only one of our preeminent drama critics; he is also a playwright, director, and former actor. He has been a professor and head of theater departments at both Yale and Harvard. He is also a highly readable writer, both erudite and witty, and best of all, a good contextualizer, effectively discussing specifics against a broader background and foreground. My only quarrel is with his taste.

A very subjective thing, taste. The only indisputable judge—or critic—in the arts is time, but even it has its limitations. A text is there in print for time to endorse or reject, but a particular production—director, actors, designs—evaporates. Even pictures, still or moving, do not speak as loud as one's having been there; any more than a reproduction is the equal of standing before a great mural.

Millennial Stages
Essays and Reviews 2001-2005
by Robert Brustein
Yale, 304 pp., $38

So I do not pretend to being more "right" than Brustein. Over the years, we have been friendly rivals and sort of friends, socializing on rare occasions and intermittently reviewing each other. Long ago, we were considered the young Turks of drama criticism and, without looking the least alike, were sometimes mistaken for each other by box office personnel.

Brustein always regarded me, ironically, as more of an academic, praising my longer essays in the *Hudson Review* and the like, but deploring my "selling out" to popular magazines such as *New York*. I, in reciprocal irony, viewed him more as an ex-thespian than as a scholar, finding his writing slightly marred by a somewhat cavalier disregard for the niceties of grammar, spelling, and getting names right. But these are venial sins in most eyes, his own no doubt included.

There remains the troubling matter of taste: No two responsible critics should have such widely diverging opinions on, say, whether Suzan-Lori Parks, Stephen Adly Guirgis, and Nilo Cruz are important playwrights, as Brustein maintains and I dispute. Similarly about plays and players. When doctors disagree, the demise or

John Simon writes about theater for Bloomberg News.

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survival of their patient provides a reasonably prompt and trustworthy answer as to who was right. In the theater, for lasting value, there is no swift and reliable yardstick. Nevertheless, a critic must, like any professional, however deluded, trust his own judgment to be the correct one.

I shall, therefore, reluctantly have to assume that where Brustein's judgment deviates from mine, it is simply wrong. But bear in mind two important points. Brustein quotes approvingly Kenneth Tynan: "What counts is not [critics'] opinion, but the art with which it is expressed." Amen, I say. Again, in reviewing Terry Coleman's book about Laurence Olivier, Brustein declares, "The biographer is a little too eager to pounce pedantically on small factual errors in Olivier's infinitely more colorful accounts of himself." Now my problem as a critic is that I am a pedantic pouncer on small errors, but let that not deter anyone from savoring Brustein's infinitely more colorful accounts of things.

Yet who could cavil with the following bull's-eyes from Brustein's pen? Take: "Rather than acknowledge the fears and fevers of our time, not to mention the terror that now enshrouds our lives, the commercial stage has been conscientiously devoted to manufacturing escapism and obscurantism, through witless entertainments and irrelevant revivals." How not to enjoy remarks like "when Bush comes to shove, we want to bury our heads in warm sand"? And although it isn't dramatic criticism, we cannot but chuckle at "we finally have a president . . . who actually believes that the world was created in six days—possibly because he now has the means to end it in one."

Criticizing the National Actors Theatre production of Brecht's *Arturo Ui*, Brustein observes, "An all-star team is unlikely to defeat even a second division club that has been together long enough to learn each other's moves." And he aptly evokes Ui's (*i.e.*, Hitler's) ascent to power: "Pacino slumps into [Old Dogsborough's, *i.e.*, Hindenburg's] leather armchair that doubles as a throne like a disgruntled mutt on his master's furniture." But it bothers me that he refers to the Berliner Ensemble's great Ui, Ekkehard Schall, as Schaal.

But how neatly he cuts down *The Invention of Love* by "the intellectual skywriter" Tom Stoppard (his *bête noire*): "There is not enough plot here for twenty minutes of action, but there is enough erudition for a fortnight." How concise and telling is this about Peter Brook, who deliberately exchanges comfortable seating in his theaters for hard benches: "With no intermission, Brook still expects his audiences to suffer for his sins." Quite rightly Brustein castigates the overrated Simon Russell Beale's *Hamlet*, and even the supporting cast, "almost all of [whom] sounded like BBC announcers or gay Oxford dons, including the women." Much as he admires Tony Kushner (way too much, if you ask me), he perceives *Homebody/Kabul* as "large talents being dissipated in a work that never quite seems to know where it is going."

Brustein is good at balancing censure with praise. Thus about one of Edward Albee's execrable plays: "*The Goat* is far from a great play. But it is a play that sneaks up on you, shakes you by the shoulders, and demands your reluctant respect." Nicely put, though I'd rather be reached through mind and heart than shoulders. But no one could quarrel with the tribute to Alan Rickman and Lindsay Duncan in *Private Lives*: "A couple with the finesse of experienced dancers in a play that resembles a ballet even more than it does drama."

Yet when Brustein says of Caryl Churchill's *Far Away* that "like so many paranoid fantasies it is quickly becoming a deadly accurate description of modern life," I buy the paranoid fantasy and the deadly, but boggle at accurate description. Reviewing an actual fantasy, Nora Ephron's *Imaginary Friends*, about Lillian Hellman and Mary McCarthy, Brustein has a brilliant paragraph on the "middlebrow playwright" and "highbrow critic," showing why they couldn't be even imaginary friends. "In one thing, however," he concludes, "they were alike. Neither would have appreciated the reductive way their essentially divergent lives have been forced into a symbiosis on the commercial stage."

Brustein likes political theater, but not politics in criticism. He says, with only slight hyperbole, that the British actor Simon Russell Beale's American reputation was "wholly created by the *New York Times*'s Ben Brantley. The British may have lost their Empire," but they still enjoy "the connivance of Yankee critics who have not yet thrown off the colonial yoke." Too bad that in the same review Brustein spells Alan Ayckbourn as "Ayckbourne."

Small matter. But what about proclaiming Stephen Adly Guirgis as having "the potential to become one of our most powerful writers for the stage"? This about *Our Lady of 121st Street*, which I described as so many crudely-tossed-together actor's exercises. Brustein goes for dramatic statements: Salome's dance of the seven veils in Wilde's play "may be the first striptease in recorded history." Then what about the descent of the Assyrian love goddess Ishtar into the Underworld to retrieve her lover? At each of seven gates she enticed the keeper by shedding one of her seven garments.

In the Actors Studio production of *Salome*, Brustein overpraises the Herod of Al Pacino, despite gross hamming and Bronx-accented speech including such mispronunciations as "mien" made disyllabic. He rightly singles out the Jokanaan of David Strathairn and the Herodias of Dianne Wiest, only to misspell them as "Straitharn" and "Weist." But he can do worse, as when he writes "Walter Bernstein's and Martin Ritt's *The Front*," which requires the possessive only after the latter.

How right he is, though, telling his "old friend" Jules Feiffer, apropos *The Bad Friend*, that "he needs to make his dialogue less quotable and his characters less defined by their

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politics . . . to capture the flowing, stammering, unpredictable quality of life." Yet in the same column he praises Derek McLane's "kaleidoscopic set" in kaleidoscopic spelling, which next shifts to "McClane." But I cannot strongly enough disagree with the appraisal of Nilo Cruz's *Anna in the Tropics* as "a truly sweet play," and the author as a "gifted playwright." This Pulitzer Prize-winner seems to me to have made it largely on our politically correct push for multiculturalism.

Languages are not Brustein's forte. His French offers "*grande amour*" and "*tableaux vivant*"; his German has "*unserer*" for "*unser* Shakespeare." Names are another problem: His colleague at the *New Republic* shuttles between Lee Siegel and Siegal. Yet how right to impugn practitioners of "Shakespeare Authorship Denial" as "people who ransack the arcane in order to avoid the obvious." But then, why be so forgiving of Britain's Jonathan Miller, whose direction has butchered countless operas, as "the smartest person I know . . . and so even his more harebrained ideas deserve to be respected"? Is Brustein another Yankee critic unable to throw off the colonial yoke?

By a similarly specious argument, Brustein, who was on the Pulitzer committee, justifies the prize to Suzan-Lori Parks for *Topdog/Underdog*, though he sees it as less than her finest. He must have a microscopic eye to be able to differentiate between Parks's pretentious but puny products.

In another review, the very un-Byronic Bryony Lavery becomes "Byrony" Lavery, and Wilde's Algernon Moncrieff turns into "Montcrieff." These, surely, are misprints; but shouldn't an author proofread as well? Instead, Brustein thanks his Yale University Press copy editor, the very person who has done him dirt. And what about, in a review of the revival of the musical *The Frogs*, Nathan Lane's "love affair with the folks out front (and they [sic] with him)"—couldn't someone have caught that? I am worried, too, when Brustein attributes the poor reception of this adaptation of Aristophanes he himself had originally commissioned to "my humor-impaired brethren."

Still, how on the mark Brustein is when, reviewing Arthur Miller's self-serving *After the Fall*, he writes, "Beware the man who discovers the moral satisfactions of personal guilt. He will never give you another quiet moment."

Brustein is always generous to what he perceives as daring, politically relevant, innovative, modern—or postmodern, as in the Dutch director Ivo van Hove's abysmal production of *Hedda Gabler*. He excuses "some loss in thematic clarity" as "a chance to see Ibsen alive and kicking on the stage." More likely *being* kicked black and blue. Or do you condone a Hedda who goes around in "a scanty pink shift" and won't even "put on a pair of panties," but "has no hesitation [in] spitefully stapling numerous bouquets to the drywalls of the "unfinished dump" she lives in?

In the musical *Spamalot*, Tim Curry is "one of the few cast members who doesn't [sic] double as other cast members." But I double up at Brustein's singing the praises of the unspeakably vulgar and inept Sara Ramirez. And can "something transpire between" two characters (in *Doubt*, which he undervalues)?

Conversely, I applaud his pronouncing *King Lear* "possibly the greatest play ever written." But should he, listing its greatest interpreters, omit John Gielgud but include F. Murray Abraham? Should he translate the Latin *accommodo* as an infinitive rather than first person singular?

Then again, I have nothing but admiration for several pieces about theater in Australia and South Africa. Such expensive trips were surely subsidized by those countries, yet Brustein is not afraid to criticize some of the shows severely. Still, I wouldn't call someone "a Kidman-type actress," which may be as patronizing to the performer as offensive to good English. And even in South Africa spellings like "delapidated" and "braggadoccio" would be rightly resented.

I can, however, sympathize with *salaam aleikum* turned into the Yiddish-sounding "*salaam aleckheim.*" One salutes any rapprochement between Arabs and Jews, although Brustein's yiddish is faulty too when *ferbissene* become "*fabissene*."

But how will Egyptians (and others) feel about Nefertiti morphed into "Nefertete"?

What I deplore more is Brustein's admiration for two such, to me, manifest phonies as Robert Wilson and Lee Breuer. Just from Brustein's detailed descriptions of their works, a serious person should recognize furibund folly. I am no stickler for realism in the theater, but flights of fancy are one thing; flying characters, for no conceivable reason, are another. And what about "a vertical screen, on which is [sic] projected supertitles"?

Promptly, however, Brustein redeems himself with a fine, detailed appreciation of Hallie Flanagan Davis, whose Federal Theater was, while not allowed to last by an unsympathetic government, a noble experiment. Less commendable is a tribute to Suzan-Lori Parks, bracketed there with Gertrude Stein and, more absurdly, James Joyce. And, incidentally, in Arthur Kopit's play title (and play), *Dad* is *Hung*, not *Put, in the Closet*.

Incomprehensible to me is Brustein's grudging assessment of Jack O'Brien's production of *Henry IV* at New York's Lincoln Center, the best Shakespeare I have ever seen in America, and not so shabby by any standard. And then to top this with special praise for its most dubious element, "Ethan Hawke's punk rocker Hotspur." But then, the radical critic goes for taking chances, however extreme.

At this point, I must give up further pouncing on Brustein's "small errors," but cannot forgo adducing "a character whom [sic] Bloom believes most fully represents" something or other. I appreciate the rhyme, but where is the reason in that accusative? There may be something

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unintentionally whimsical in spelling a co-respondent in a divorce case as "correspondent."

But I admire Brustein's judicious evaluation of George S. Kaufman in his review of the Library of America edition of his principal works. How perceptive is this:

> *Once in a Lifetime* recalls an ancient time when movies were adapted from what used to be called 'the legitimate theatre' as opposed to the present when Broadway musicals are based on Hollywood movies, a time when film producers stole talent from the stage instead of vice versa, a time when showmen considered themselves shamans, and could condescend to lowbrow studio philistines. Today, it is not so easy to determine which is the more compromised art.

Similarly illuminating is an essay on Shakespeare's creative use, or misuse, of geography, as Brustein visits Mediterranean locales from the plays. No less fine is the tribute to Primo Levi apropos Anthony Sher's splendid monodrama, *Primo*, culled from Levi's writings. A judicious essay about the late Richard Gilman contains this valuable point: "What distinguishes a critic from an opinionator is the capacity to describe what one sees, and possibly suggest a better alternative." The concluding piece, using biographies of Laurence Olivier and Elia Kazan as a springboard for some shrewd assessments of their differences and similarities, I find extremely valuable.

In it, Brustein properly faults Richard Schickel for calling *The Changeling* (which Kazan poorly directed) "minor and hard to stage." Brustein labels this "mildly philistine," and continues, "*The Changeling* is a masterpiece, a psychological study of love between two monsters as subtle as any in the language, and difficult to produce only if you've never before directed a classical play. . . . It is not necessary to establish your modernist credentials by obliterating the past."

Reading such things, you may well feel like kissing Brustein on both his modernist cheeks. ♦

The Talking Cure

The human voice as the engine of democracy.

BY PATRICK J. DENEEN

There is a storyline that underlies much contemporary teaching of the history of political thought.

In the beginning were the Greek philosophers who, while subtle and profound, nevertheless at the end of the day were unreconstructed elitists. Plato, for one, viewed democracy as a form of mob rule and urged, instead, governance by specially-trained philosopher-kings who had superhuman abilities to discern and apply the solutions for the problems of cities. Aristotle, if apparently more sympathetic to democracy, begins by excluding broad swaths of people from citizenship, including slaves, women, and "vulgar mechanics"—blue-collar workers, in a manner of speaking. By the time you account for all the excluded classes of people in Aristotle's "democracy," what's left of the citizenry looks increasingly like Plato's elites.

Saving Persuasion
A Defense of Rhetoric and Judgment
by Bryan Garsten
Harvard, 290 pp., $45

As the story continues, the Greek view held sway for much of human history, essentially until the Enlightenment and the rise of a kind of "democratic faith" expressed by such thinkers as Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Immanuel Kant, and, at times, John Stuart Mill. If occasionally expressing reservations about democracy, such thinkers nevertheless inaugurated an era marked by growing belief in the moral progress of humanity from brute existence to increasing refinement and even "perfectibility." Such thinkers rejected the dour Greek view of human capacity for rational self-rule and increasingly endorsed democracy as not only practicable, but the only justifiable form of political organization.

As our enlightenment has continued, we rejected not only the ancient pessimism about democracy, but even the residual reservations about democracy of the early modern period, and have now reached an age in which democracy is universally recognized as the only justifiable form of government. Today's academy, where inheritors of Rousseau, Kant, and Mill reign, is the locus of defenses of more extensive democracy—in John Dewey's words, a belief that the cures for the problems of democracy lie always in more democracy.

A dominant school of thought in today's academy seeks to extend "deliberative democracy" in all instances, articulated and advanced by such thinkers as the late John Rawls and Jürgen Habermas. We have come a long way from the cramped ancient view, now having achieved an enlightened rejection of elitism and an embrace of democratic egalitarianism and supreme confidence in the democratic capacities of the people.

So the story goes, and students are rarely advised that the evidence may not fit the narrative.

Putting aside cant (if not Kant), clear-eyed thinkers cannot avoid noticing that the apparent contemporary confidence in democracy, in fact, masks a deep and pervasive mistrust toward broad swaths of the citizenry which might, in an open democratic setting, introduce to the public square what modern "deliberative democrats" regard

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Bettmann / Corbis

'Lord John Russell Speaking' to the House of Commons, 1831

as "unreasonable" arguments. Modern academic democrats offer extensive and elaborate criteria for what arguments and reasons can be admitted into political discourse. Designating acceptable arguments as ones that clear the bar of "public reason," today's most ardent democratic thinkers seek to ensure that a mechanism is in place to prevent the inclusion of arguments—or citizens who make them—that might question the basic liberal orthodoxies of the day.

Through this predefinition of what constitutes "reasonable" arguments, such thinkers ensure that there will be very little disagreement among prescreened "deliberative" citizens. Unreasonable arguments include any that appeal to religious grounds; arguments that can be deemed to be based upon unreasoned prejudice, such as those based upon tradition or custom; and, essentially, any arguments that would limit the contemporary assumption that "democracy" means thoroughgoing individual autonomy. Restrictions on abortion, divorce on demand, gay marriage, or any other arguably debatable issues are regarded by contemporary "democrats" as beyond the pale of acceptable democratic discourse.

Today's democrats are, all too often, highly self-satisfied in their felt sense of intellectual superiority to previous thinkers who expressed concerns about democracy, yet often even more restrictive about who is permitted full democratic access than those previous thinkers they excoriate.

Bryan Garsten, currently an assistant professor of political theory at Yale, has masterfully documented the origins of this modern mistrust of the masses and the rise of exclusionary procedural liberalism in *Saving Persuasion*. Contemporary thinkers have long been aware that the roots of contemporary versions of "deliberative democracy" lie in the philosophical reflections of thinkers ranging from Thomas Hobbes to Immanuel Kant. Garsten ably explores the ground that animated the early modern exclusionary move toward "public reason" (a phrase first used by Hobbes and later reiterated by Kant); namely, those fears held by early modern thinkers that arose over religious divisions marking the Reformation.

In the face of Protestant preachers appealing to the individual conscience of members of their flocks, and the fears of widespread division that would result from each person following his or her own belief in what the word of God demanded in the current conflicts, thinkers like Hobbes, Rousseau, and Kant each appealed to a form of "public reason" as a standard that would garner greater social conformity to the pronouncements of one sovereign. "Public reason" became the measure of what "reasonable people" would agree to if they actually thought reasonably about a particular issue. The conclusions demanded by "public reason" were thus invoked *in the name of the people*, as being those decisions the people *would* reach hypothetically under optimal philosophic circumstances. Public reason thus maintained the patina of democratic legitimacy, even as it justified extensive and even absolute rule by, alternatively, Hobbes's Leviathan, Rousseau's Legislator, and Kant's "enlightened ruler" whose advisers consisted of—yes, little surprise—the professoriate.

But Garsten's story is even richer, and more revealing, than those studies that recognize the animating fears of these thinkers (fears that explain the contemporary resurgence of interest in "public reason" in the wake of the widely acknowledged demise of the "secularization thesis"). For Garsten further recognizes that the form of discourse that was rejected by early modern proponents of public reason was not *unreason*, but rather, persuasion based upon *classical rhetoric*. Persuasion and rhetoric were explicitly the object of attack and derision by thinkers ranging from Hobbes to Kant, and remain regarded with deep and abiding suspicion by contemporary liberal thinkers who associate rhetoric with the unreasonable manipulation of people's emotions, fears, and prejudices. Indeed, the thoroughgoing victory of this viewpoint goes a long way in explaining the pejorative understanding with which most people today regard the very word "rhetoric."

In contrast to contemporary assumptions that ancient thought was a repository of antidemocratic elitism, Garsten shows how classical thinkers such as Aristotle and Cicero defended a politics of rhetoric and persuasion on both prudential and principled grounds. According to these ancient sources, a politics based upon persuasion assumes that people begin with different stances but that, through a thorough exploration of an issue by a series of well-trained orators, some portion of the citizenry can be led to change their initial view, and the polity can set a course with the support of a considerable majority of that citizenry.

A politics based upon extensive use of rhetoric thus contains several assumptions that are categorically rejected by theories of "public reason." First, it holds that no argument should be prejudged to be out of bounds: Even

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those arguments that, according to some, appear to be "unreasonable" might, in fact, have a basis in the shared reality of a polity and prove justified according to the shared reasons of a polity. Political decisions are best reached *politically*—through the give and take of political debate and discourse—rather than by the imposition of a standard of "public reason" predetermined by intellectual elites.

Second, it assumes that the citizenry possesses a store of "common sense" that has its source in the shared life of a city. Such a view argues for the acknowledgment of the legitimacy of opinion and tradition, and against the often-hurried imposition of pure theories upon an imperfect polity. The politics of rhetoric is a politics of patience.

Third, a politics that stresses rhetoric places an emphasis upon the faculty of *judgment*, and thus, in the language of Aristotle, in the development of *phronesis*, alternatively translated as "prudence" and "practical wisdom." One size does not fit all: Political circumstances will always demand reflection and judgment of a citizenry that is itself educated by and through oratory.

Finally, a politics of rhetoric assumes that citizens can and ought to be moved by an appeal beyond narrow self-interest and can be persuaded that the common good may and can justify changing one's mind in light of one's interest more broadly conceived.

As may be obvious, theorists of "public reason" favor courts and bureaucracies for the pursuit of the politics of "reasonableness." Harboring fears of a democratic citizenry, they seek out political venues that can arrive at "reasonable" decisions in the name of the people but are, in fact, likely to be *least* influenced by the people. A politics of rhetoric and persuasion favors legislatures and more local public venues of the sort Alexis de Tocqueville extolled in his tour of America.

Beneath heated contemporary debates over judicial activism and top-down bureaucratic uniformity lie a deep set of philosophical debates about the nature of democracy itself, debates that Garsten ably traces and clarifies.

He does not ignore the legitimate fears of classical and contemporary critics of political rhetoric: Opening a significant sphere for the employment of political rhetoric always invites the possibility of manipulation and demagoguery. Yet Garsten also rightly recognizes that, in a democracy, rhetoric is always likely to be employed in the effort to secure political advantage. A democratic polity that does not give rhetoric some pride of place—including an education in rhetoric, not only of orators, but of those citizens who will more often be listening than practicing oratory—leaves the field largely open to the manipulators and demagogues. If contemporary suspicion of manipulative rhetoric would seem to be justified, that is perhaps because one gets the rhetoric that one expects.

Rather than shrinking from widespread civic deliberation in the name of "public reason" predetermined by elites, Garsten rightly calls for today's citizens to "once again look directly at one another and speak directly to one another." Note that neither silence nor shouting is commended in a politics of rhetoric, but, above all, speech to and among citizens. In a polity in which rhetoric is no longer derided, it might be expected that politics itself might come to be regarded as ennobling, and worthy of our shared devotion. ♦

Skin Deep

Age and beauty, the Hollywood way.

BY CHARLOTTE ALLEN

Nora Ephron's latest book, a collection of essays by the 65-year-old author of the screenplays for *When Harry Met Sally . . .* and *Sleepless in Seattle*, catapulted to the top of the bestseller lists when it was published, and remains in the vicinity. That's because it seems to combine two genres irresistible to readers of Ephron's sex (female), age (getting up there), and socioeconomic class (extremely high-end): The Plastic Surgery Autobiographical Horror Story (exemplified by *New York Times* shopping columnist Alex Kuczynski's Restylane-splattered *Beauty Junkies: Inside Our $15 Billion Obsession With Cosmetic Surgery*), and Lusty Menopause Lit (exemplified by Gail Sheehy's *Sex and the Seasoned Woman: Pursuing the Passionate Life*, which comes in a large-print edition for those seasoned souls whose eyesight isn't as strong as their libidos).

I Feel Bad About My Neck
And Other Thoughts on Being a Woman
by Nora Ephron
Knopf, 160 pp., $19.95

Ephron does not fail to deliver on the former score, although briefly. In a 15-page chapter titled "On Maintenance" (originally an article in *O* magazine), she details an array of procedures she uses to prolong youth's illusion, ranging from the unexceptionable, such as her two-tone hair-dye jobs that occupy at least three boredom-inducing hours of her time every six weeks, to what she describes as the "pathetic": having all the fillings in her teeth replaced with white material, undergoing regular injections of Restylane ("it sort of fills in the saggy parts" of her chin), experimenting with Botox (the botulism derivative that paralyzes your forehead into wrinkle-free marmoreality).

All this attention to what Ephron calls putting one's "finger in the dike" has a Thorstein Veblenesque status component because it is fearfully

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Zuma Press / Kelly Owen

Nora Ephron

expensive (the tooth thing alone apparently set Ephron back $20,000) and you can thus one-up your less affluent neighbors and readers because you can afford it and they can't. Much of it also has a pain component, such as the once-a-month "threading" that Ephron undergoes to remove a mustache from her upper lip and inhibit bushy eyebrows. She writes: "Threading involves thread—garden-variety sewing thread—a long strand of which is twisted and maneuvered in a sort of cat's cradle configuration so as to remove hair in a way that is quick and painful (although not, I should point out, as painful as, say, labor)." Accounts of ritualized masochism—enduring excruciating and humiliating dolors on a regular basis—used to be reserved for pornography but are now a standard feature of beautification-attuned autobiographical literature.

From *Story of O* to *O* magazine, one might say.

The result of this vast expenditure of time, money, and agony on herself is . . . a perfectly attractive if not astonishingly good-looking older woman, Ephron's photos reveal. Or so they would reveal if she didn't swathe her upmost parts in black turtleneck sweaters, floaty, hijab-like scarves, and that pricey 'do whose bangs swing to her nose, so as to reveal little of her face except her eyes. Ephron titled her book (and another of its component essays) *I Feel Bad About My Neck* because she genuinely hates her neck. It's got an ugly surgical scar on it, she explains, or maybe it's just plain wrinkled. In any event, she seems to cover it compulsively these days because you can do quite a bit with your face but, short of a full-bore facelift, there's nothing that hair dye and injected substances can do to give your neck the illusion of youth.

"Our faces are lies and our necks are the truth," she writes.

These *aperçus* have been the focus of all the recent attention paid to Ephron's book, as well as its impressive sales (it is hard to imagine any young woman being the slightest bit interested in *I Feel Bad About My Neck* or its author). The book has also generated the usual horrified feminist moralizing, such as this rhetorical question asked by the *Washington Post*'s Libby Copeland: "When do we get to abandon this exhausting doggypaddle and sink into a dignified old age?" Ephron is having none of that. There is nothing especially dignified about old age as far as she is concerned:

> There are all sorts of books written for older women. They are, as far as I can tell, uniformly upbeat and full of bromides and homilies about how pleasant life can be once one is free from all the nagging obligations of children, monthly periods, and in some cases, full-time jobs. I find these books to be utterly useless, just as I found all the books I once read about menopause utterly useless. Why do people write books that say that it's better to be older than younger? It's not better.

Yes, it is refreshing to note that many of the prosperous ladies of middle years who attend Ephron's readings and then stand in line to have *I Feel Bad About My Neck* autographed will be unpleasantly surprised to discover that Lusty Menopause Lit it is not. Nora Ephron is the anti-Gail Sheehy: "If you're lucky enough to be in a sexual relationship, you're not going to have the sex you once had," she warns.

This is not to say that *I Feel Bad About My Neck* is a book one ought to rush out and buy. For one thing, it's a chisel, pricewise—160 rather small pages of rather large print for $19.95. That works out to around 15 cents a page, and most of those pages have already appeared elsewhere, at better value: in *O*, *Vogue*, *Harper's Bazaar*, the *New York Times* op-ed page. If you subscribe to the *New Yorker* you will have already read—and wondered why you read—"Serial Monogamy: A Memoir," an account not, as you might hope, of Ephron's three marriages—including the second and juiciest one, to the flamboyantly adulterous Watergate reporter Carl Bernstein—but of her culinary thralldom to several chefs whose names were apparently household words in Manhattan back in the 1960s and '70s when Ephron was young, but are blanks today.

This "Lee Bailey" at whose trendy behest Ephron threw out all her dinner plates and napkins so as to buy beige tableware identical to his at Henri Bendel—who was he? The *New Yorker* also originally ran "Moving On," in which Ephron complains lugubriously about the day her five-bedroom, two-fireplace Upper West Side apartment became rent-decontrolled and she learned that the $2,500-a-month rent she had been paying would increase substantially. Imagine such a hardship for a multimillionaire screenwriter!

I myself have always found that a very little of Nora Ephron's endlessly wisecracking, name-dropping, and self-obsessed prose can go a very long way. The characters in *When Harry Met Sally* . . . and *Sleepless in Seattle* struck me as not so much human beings as meat puppets for Ephron one-liners who were predestined by the films' creaky plots to fall into each others' arms. I couldn't get past the first 10 brittle pages of *Heartburn*, Ephron's bestselling *roman à clef* about the marriage to Bernstein. As for her Upper West Side politics, the less said the better; suffice it to say that George W. Bush is responsible for dead people, and Bill Clinton fooled around with Monica Lewinsky—but darn, he's so cute.

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Still, *I Feel Bad About My Neck* packs a punch. Underneath the jokes, it is a dark, merciless book. It holds a mirror to a culture in which there is absolutely nothing beyond the self, and the expensive things that the self might acquire and the ineluctable fact that, for all those things, the self is helpless against old age and death. Dignified old age? The decay of one's looks is the least of it: "Even if you have all your marbles, you're constantly reaching for the name of the person you met the day before yesterday," she writes. "Even if you're in great shape, you can't chop an onion the way you used to and you can't ride a bicycle several miles without becoming a candidate for traction. If you work, you're surrounded by young people who are plugged into the marketplace, the demographic, the zeitgeist; they want your job and someday soon they're going to get it."

It's the converse of the *Cosmo Girl* ethos, where the body, slaved over and pampered, can be used; here, the body, slaved over and pampered, works against you, over and over, and in ever more sickening and frightening ways.

"I am dancing around the D word," Ephron writes. Relentlessly, too. In a matter-of-fact paragraph, she describes how, when her mother was dying of cirrhosis, her father decided it was time for her to go, and fed her a bunch of sleeping pills. Then he asked his daughter to flush the rest of them down the toilet. That was all there was. In the literature of the Middle Ages (François Villon's *Testament* comes to mind), the hideous old woman who had once been young and beautiful was a stock figure, but she served a moral purpose, to remind one of the futility of living only for pleasure.

In *I Feel Bad About My Neck* the hideous old woman is there—or would be, Ephron surmises, without the frantic, costly regime of "maintenance"—as is the futility and the living only for pleasure. The moral purpose, however, is entirely absent. This book is a *memento mori*, and the thing to be remembered is nothingness once the body goes. ♦

The Science of Fiction

Plot, characters, agents, and dust jackets.

BY DIANE SCHARPER

On meeting Harriet Beecher Stowe, author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), Abraham Lincoln commented wryly, "'So this is the little lady who started a great war.'" And if Tony Blair were brave enough to be seen with Salman Rushdie, he might make a similar observation about the author of *The Satanic Verses*, who arguably provoked the present crisis in the Middle East. At least, that's how John Sutherland sees it in his latest book, which doesn't explain how to read a novel so much as it describes the history of the novel and the conventions associated with it. Informative yet humorous, the book is crammed with fascinating facts playfully arranged.

How to Read a Novel
A User's Guide
by John Sutherland
St. Martin's, 272 pp., $21.95

Whenever the subject matter threatens to become heavy, Sutherland adds an anecdote or puts forth a pun. He doesn't tell any explicitly dirty jokes, but he often illustrates his points with some laugh-out-loud sexual innuendo, as when Sutherland notes that Norman Mailer in *The Naked and the Dead* larded his dialogue with the word "Fug," which inspired Dorothy Parker to say, "So you're the young man who can't spell 'f—.'" But as pleasant as it is to read, this book has a serious message: The more intelligently you read, the richer your experience will be. And while you don't have to understand all the historical and internal underpinnings of a book, knowing those things can't hurt.

We learn that William Caxton (1422-1491), who founded the British book trade, was taught the art of printing in Cologne and set up his printing press in Westminster Abbey around 1474. The first item he printed was a treatise on indulgences, his first book a translation of the sayings of the philosophers.

Gradually, paper (invented by the Chinese) and movable type made possible the ordering, transmission, and circulation of information that became print culture and the foundation of the modern world. Print culture generated the novel, whose name literally means new thing, as opposed to poetry and drama—both very old things, which didn't need to be in print.

The arrival of fiction—Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1741)—correlated with two other sociocultural happenings in Britain: the rise of capitalism and the notion of individualism. Both shaped the novel from its production to its price, distribution, reception, and consumption. Not only is the novel the product of an advanced social culture; it's also the mark of a mature and educated personal culture. A little more than 200 years later, Pamela, with her sterling character, had given way to modern heroines like Lady Chatterley. First printed in Italy in 1928, and in the United States in 1959, D.H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, with its explicit sex scenes, changed history. It also split publishing into pre-Chatterley and post-Chatterley years, with its 1959 break falling "across the careers of authors like Philip Roth (compare *Goodbye Columbus* [1959] with his outrageous homage to onanism, *Portnoy's Complaint* [1969])."

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Organizing his book, Sutherland looks at the novel from a distance, then moves in close. He describes its history, the publishing industry, the particular genres of fiction, the volume itself (replete with dust jacket, cover art, blurb or synopsis, and endorsement tags), the page (title, copyright, epigraph, foreword, afterword), and the words on the page.

An emeritus professor of literature at University College London, columnist for the *Guardian*, veteran reviewer, and committee chairman for the 2005 Man Booker Prize, Sutherland believes that novels should be enjoyed, not analyzed. But he doesn't use the word "enjoy" lightly: He loads it with its etymological significance. For him, enjoyment isn't idle fun; it's pleasure in taking possession, as Webster's unabridged suggests. The more readers know, the more they can "possess" a novel and, thereby, enjoy it.

That's why Sutherland believes that it's almost as difficult to read a novel well as it is to write one—well. Yet the difficulty is worth it: "A clever engagement with the novel is one of the more noble functions of human intelligence," he declares. For starters, Sutherland advises readers to choose a book that they can afford and that suits their interests and tastes. Since there are so many novels and so little time to read, this is easier said than done: "Every week now more novels are published than Samuel Johnson had to deal with in a decade." If someone reads 40 hours a week every week, except for vacation, and can read a book in three hours, he would "need 163 lifetimes to read them all."

Hype adds to the difficulty of choosing a suitable book. Confusing, coercive, and culturally deafening, the signals surrounding a book make an intelligent choice almost impossible. Prospective readers are bombarded with everything from celebrity authorship, high-pressure sales tactics (best-seller lists to price discounts), advertisements, endorsements, and dust jackets. Yet you must navigate the hype in order to start the intelligent-browsing (Sutherland calls it powerful-browsing) stage of book-buying, in which readers face myriad considerations, beginning with their choice of genre. Ranging from Christian novels to pornography, fiction comes in almost as many flavors as ice cream, including chick lit, literary fiction, thrillers, science fiction, fantasy, satire, graphic novels, horror, historical fiction, and detective stories.

The task would be difficult enough if money were no object. But price is important, which leads to the next consideration: hardcovers or paperbacks? Paperbacks are cheaper, but they aren't usually reviewed. Paperback reprints mean that the book sold well, but does that mean anything? How much credence to put in awards like the National Book Award, the Pulitzer Prize, the Nobel Prize, and the Man Booker Prize? Do these show the biases of judges or a writer's quality? A little of both, Sutherland suggests.

D.H. Lawrence

Hulton-Deutsch Collection / Corbis

What about bestseller lists? Considering the ways booksellers and publishers promote books, can lists serve as a guide to choosing a good novel? Or are they just a form of advertising?

For that matter, are reviews a form of advertising, too? Are they helpful or trustworthy? How good are word-of-mouth recommendations, especially when compared with those of professionals? What about pre-pub reviews in magazines like *Publisher's Weekly* versus newspaper and magazine reviews? How trustworthy are the blurbs on the covers? Blurbs (from the cartoon character, Miss Belinda Blurb) are written to give away enough of the plot to entice readers to buy the book. Shoutlines, or endorsement tags, which also appear on the book's cover in hardbacks (or on the first pages of a paperback) have either been taken out of reviews or solicited from other writers, often friends of the author.

Fewer than 5 percent of new novels get reviewed, partly because reviewers are swamped (Sutherland thinks reviewers spend too much time finding fault with minutiae). Reviewers also consider it a matter of "professional pride not to agree with each other," which makes Sutherland question their standards. Like the American critic Dale Peck (*Hatchet Jobs*), Sutherland considers reviewing a kind of pelting with dung lest writers get above themselves.

One of the most informative and funniest sections concerns the dust jacket, which Sutherland warns is not just for dust. Take the example of Michel Houellebecq's *The Elementary Particles*. Originally published in France in 1998, it is a novel of ideas presented as a philosophical analysis of world civilization in the new millennium, with humanity seen bleakly in "the throes of a third mutation." Since translations and metaphysical books by French intellectuals sell badly, the publishers put a skimpily clad woman on the book's jacket (no relation to the contents of *Atomised*) as a way to entice readers. "But using women's bodies as cheese on the literary mousetrap has a venerable tradition," Sutherland reminds us. And possibly subscribing to that same tradition, he laces these pages with reproductions of a few of those salacious covers. Not that he's trying to sell his book, mind you. He's only trying to bring home his point. ♦

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York Times

Upper West Side Final
Sure, parts of New York are getting eight *feet* of snow in one week, but Ellen Goodman's right: Global warming deniers are now the same as Holocaust deniers. It's WARM out there. Trust us.

UNO DOLLAR

Y, FEBRUARY 15, 2007

ANOTHER NETWORK PROMOTION CAUSES RIOTS, PANIC, BEDLAM

Cartoon Network Robot with Tentacles 'Not Meant to Harm'

By KATIE ZEZIMA

HOBOKEN, Feb. 14—It was, unfortunately, a promo gone terribly wrong.

At around 3 p.m., residents of this working-class neighborhood dropped what they were doing to watch an electrical storm unfold, complete with swirling black clouds and lightning bolts. Cars screeched to a halt, streetlights went out, watches stopped. Then came the rumbling.

Within minutes, the intersection of Washington and 3rd Streets was ripped apart by a subterranean force. Out of the rubble emerged a ten-story robot supported by tentacles and emitting a deafening sound like a giant subwoofer. Men, women, and children screamed in terror—all believing this to be the end of the world.

According to media reps at the Turner Broadcasting System, this enormous pod-like robot was intended to relay information about "Captain Planet," a show on the Cartoon Network. "As you know, it is very hard to capture the attention of young adults," explained one TBS rep who asked to remain anonymous. "We thought this giant, goofy-looking machine would do the trick. Sadly, it seems to be malfunctioning."

The pod-like creature began picking up pedestrians with its tentacles, tossing them around, and inserting them into what appeared to be some type of robotical orifice. No one is sure why. After trampling over Sinatra Drive, the robot was seen heading in the direction of Weehawken.

Robert Dennis Dwyer for Worldwide Imag

The robot wreaking havoc in Hoboken was supposed to tell residents to watch "Captain Planet" on the Cartoon Network.

In recent days, other networks have also been embarrassed by promotions gone awry. Last Friday, Animal Planet apologized to the city of New York for its "Meerkat Manor" stunt, in which hundreds of meerkats were set loose on a subway car during the morning rush hour. The SciFi Channel was equally apologetic for its "Battlestar Galactica" promo that involved a "spaceship" hovering above the White House and shooting a supposedly "harmless" laser beam. And not one person in Chicago was amused by the Lifetime Channel's "Stalkers Among Us" gag that had suspicious-looking male actors chasing after innocent women. On the other hand, the Spic

Continued on Page A8

the weekly Standard
FEBRUARY 19, 2007

Cowboys Name Jerry Jones

Image: ©Paramount Pictures / DreamWorks Pictures

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